

LONDON READER

of Literature, Science, Art, and General Information.

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[REGISTERED FOR TRANSMISSION ABROAD.]

No. 856.—VOL. XXXIII.]

FOR THE WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 27, 1879.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[PLAYING WITH FIRE.]

UNDER A LOVE CHARM; OR, A SECRET WRONG.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Christine's Revenge; or, O'Hara's Wife,"

"The Mystery of His Love; or, Who

Married Them?" &c., &c.

CHAPTER V.

WAS IT A DREAM?

There is a secret horror in the air.
Something of evil surely lurketh there;
Something unblest, unholy, terrible,
Some fleshless monster from the abyss.

LEONTINE was at the age when sleep is deepest and sweetest. She was overcome with fatigue and the sensation of weariness. The desire which her spirit felt to escape into the enchanted realms of dreamland was stronger than her vague fears of the unlooked door and of the mysterious "somebody" who might creep in while she was sleeping and murder her, as the unhappy lady below had been murdered. Was that what she feared?

"I am very, very foolish to have such thoughts," she said to herself. "After all this is a house full of people. There are Doctor Thorne, his wife and children, and their servants, several gentlemen pupils, with two resident masters, English and French; besides,

there is Lady Melrose, my lovely cousin, the Rev. Mr. Agnew, the cousin of Lady Melrose, and Doctor Finucan. All the doors are surely barred and bolted. The murderer has escaped; he will not come again. If he did he would not kill me. I will—I must—sleep, just for an hour."

And Leontine yielded to the delicious drowsy sensation, and drifted off into the land of dreams. All at once she awoke, cold and shivering, with an indescribable horror and loathing quite impossible to translate into words. It was as if a cold, murderous hand had grasped her throat, but had relinquished it on her suddenly starting up.

Day, or at least dawn, had now broken. There was that cold, ghostly light in the room which creeps through our windows in summer and autumn just before the sun breaks out and calls forth man to his labours. Leontine started up. She saw a shadowy figure enter a closet near to the window.

Yes, she distinctly saw the door close closely. Somebody was inside holding it, she was convinced of that. Her most natural impulse was to spring from the bed and rush out into the corridor. There the grey light came through the window placed high near the ceiling over the staircase. She did not call out. Something held her spellbound. At the same time she was quite sensible of a deadly sickening sensation of danger.

All the time she watched the door of her room—the door that would not lock. Something evil lurked on the other side of that, she was quite convinced. But what, and who and why in the name of secret wickedness had she been singled out as a victim? She knew that the

old Earl of Hartbury, with his broad manors, his lordly mansions, his gold and rank and earthly treasures, was her grandfather, her father's father.

Even he, the said old earl, did not deny that fact. All that he denied was the legitimacy of his son, his right to the name and title of Melrose, and since his son would not acknowledge himself as baseborn, nor call himself simple William Wheeler, he had cast him penniless upon the world, to struggle with it or to starve as he was best able. Did not this show that the earl dreaded some day a revelation which would prove the unfortunate William to be indeed his lawful heir, the true Lord Melrose, and if this were true perhaps he wished him dead—him and his children, root and branch; perhaps he paid assassins to creep about looking for William Melrose and his children, and seeking occasion to kill them. If so, Doctor Finucan was one of his agents.

How he had started when he had heard the name of Melrose. Most likely he had made inquiries and was satisfied that Leontine was one of the daughters of the true heir, and he had, therefore, crept into her room with intent to strangle her in her sleep, and he was even now hiding in the dark closet in there. The beautiful girl stood in the corridor, pale, and with horror-distended eyes.

The reader will perceive that her usually acute brain and reasonable thinking powers were dulled and stupefied by terror. There was no sequence, no reason in this train of surmise; there was only the folly of a frightened child, alarmed at the story of the good little boy who was eaten by a bogie or carried off by a witch. Had her father been able to prove himself Lord

Melrose, had there been danger to the present wearer of the title and heir to the earldom, danger of being proved illegitimate and nameless, the life or the death of William's daughter Leontine would have had nothing to do with the affair.

No thought of the danger and exposure and suspicion that would fall on the present Lord Melrose and his dependents if a young lady, supposed to be related to them, was found murdered in the same house where any of them abode entered the distracted mind of poor Leontine as she stood in that grey, ghostly corridor shivering in the early dawn.

She watched the door afraid to turn her back upon it; she fancied by an instinct which the revelations of after years proved to have been a true one, that if she turned her back on the door her danger would be increased. She felt she must watch and see who came out. And while she watched her tongue clove to the roof of her mouth in abject fear. When she saw the door opening slowly, stealthily, Leontine retreated backwards towards the staircase. As she did so there emerged from the room a tall, very tall figure, enveloped from throat to heels in loose black flowing drapery. This form passed almost as swiftly as a shadow along the corridor, turned a corner, and disappeared.

Then it seemed to Leontine that the spell was broken. She found voice, and sent the very air with her loud and piercing cries. The effect was instantaneous, for numbers of doors opened, numbers of heads appeared, numbers of voices asked her what was the matter? She was conscious of several figures in strange, heterogeneous costume surging round her. Among these little excited Doctor Thorne, in his long dressing-gown and list slippers, his small, weak, reddish-brown eyes minus the spectacles which in general covered them.

"What is the matter? What has alarmed you?" asked the rev. doctor.

Fixing her blue eyes in confusion on a young, round-faced housemaid, who appeared on the scene attired in a large rough jacket and an extraordinary patched skirt, Leontine answered that somebody had come into the room where she had been sleeping—a room without a lock to the door; that this somebody had first awakened her, and then sought to hide in the clothes closet, and that on her escaping the person—a person tall, and draped in black—had rushed out of the room and fled along the passage.

"Fancy, the nerves, a dream, over excitement, impossible!" These words in various voices, uttered by various people, with severe shakes of the head, or with smiles of incredulous pity, according to the age, sex or temperament of the individual who listened to her story, were all that reached the ears or the understanding of poor Leontine in regard to the ghostly or evil-disposed visitant, human or unearthly, who had intruded on her slumbers.

The young girl was firm in her conviction that she had not dreamed. From that day forward the remembrance of the strange visitant remained to her a palpable fact, a subject for terror and wonder and shrinking.

As the days followed the days there came other elements into the life of Leontine Melrose which made the terrible circumstances that had marked that fifth of September, when she passed the night at Doctor Thorne's, appear trivial as weighed against the tragedy and secret anguish of her own individual life. But through it all, the memory of the tall, mysterious visitant draped in black remained real, tangible and horrible in her mind.

"No dream," she said to herself, then and ever afterwards. "A ghost if you like—yes, if such things are, but no dream. I stood on the staircase in the grey morning light and saw the door unclose slowly, carefully, and then out came the 'thing'—tall, erect, the stature of a tall human being, but shadowy, because wrapped from head to heels in a black mantle."

Some of the women servants went into the room with Leontine and searched the closet. It was a place where clothes for the wash were thrown in on the floor, but this was the begin-

ning of the week, and the floor was bare. Whoever had hidden in the little room must have been seen, if Leontine had opened the door. There were no coats or cloaks upon the pegs in which a person might have wrapped themselves, and stood thus like a shadow against the wall. No, Leontine might have seen the intruder had she had the courage to look into the cupboard. She utterly refused now to retire to the bed or occupy the room unless a key could be found, and she could manage to lock the door. This could not be managed; the key could not be found.

She, therefore, went into the room of Miss Peterson, the nursery governess at Doctor Thorne's, and she lay on a chair-bedstead by the side of the governess, who occupied a large bed with one of her pupils. The lock of this room was in order.

Miss Peterson fastened it, and poor Leontine lay down and slept peacefully for three hours. At seven o'clock she arose as by instinct, bathed her face, put on her hat, which, with her scarf, had been placed in her room, and then she crept out of the house and back to number fifteen, St. Charles Street. There she had a cold bath in her own mean little room, which she shared with her eldest half sister. She put on the plain stuff dress of every day, partook of a simple breakfast, and then started on her weary, monotonous round of daily toil.

Within a few days the story of poor Miss Germain's tragical death filled columns of all the daily papers, and more than one leading article was written on the mysterious occurrence, and wild surmises were afloat as to the escape of the murderer.

The Melrose family were in much doubt and perplexity respecting poor Leontine. Mr. Melrose quite expected that she would be called as a witness, but nothing of the kind occurred. Leontine herself retained a vivid and painful memory of all the events of that most terrible night.

She herself at first fancied that she must be called as a witness; she had heard such strange words pass between the dying woman and Doctor Finncan, but soon she comprehended that the said doctor had supposed, and still supposed, her to be ignorant of French, consequently the words she had heard were secrets not intended for her ears, and duty and delicacy alike commanded her to keep silence respecting them.

Still, when she read the accounts which the papers gave, she stood aghast at the manner in which the reported and carefully detailed story fell wide of the truth. The following resumé of one account in a paper, which is said to have the "largest circulation in the world," will show the reader that Leontine might well open her eyes in wonder at the difference between report and reality.

"A LARGE assembly of titled and fashionable persons were gathered together last Monday at the residence of a rev. and learned and deservedly respected gentleman, when an appalling crime took place. The floors of a good man's house were literally stained with blood. A number of gay, innocent people, assembled together to celebrate the distribution of prizes of merit bestowed upon ardent young students who were preparing to take their places in the universities of their native land, were all silenced, appalled, dumb-stricken with as much horror as though a thunderbolt had fallen in their midst.

"The unhappy victim, Miss Germain, was a lady who, although she had passed first youth, was still a very fascinating and charming individual. She occupied the position of confidential companion to Lady Melrose, wife of Lord Melrose, the honourable member for Chesterwood, in the County of Worcester, and son and heir of the Right Hon. the Earl of Hartbury. Her ladyship, with her son and her eldest daughter, one of the most peerless beauties of the English aristocracy, had honoured the breaking-up party at Doctor Thorne's with her presence.

"Mr. Conrad Melrose, son of Lord Melrose, was one of the students on whom two prizes

were about to be bestowed. Her ladyship was accompanied by her companion, Miss Germain. She was with her in the conservatory engaged in selecting a rose for the hair of Miss Melrose when a person described as a dark man, with long hair, wild eyes, and disordered garments, rushed on the scene and upbraided poor Miss Germain.

"He told her that she had broken his heart, ruined his prospects and blighted his life. She had promised to marry him twenty years before, but had put him off from year to year, because she had entered the family of Lord Melrose, where she enjoyed all the luxuries and refinements of life; a very large salary, rich gifts, and the boundless favour of Lady Melrose, who treated her like a sister.

"The lover said that disappointed love had driven him insane, and that unless Miss Germain would marry him the next morning and accompany him to the house of his mother that night, he would kill her. Lady Melrose attempted to expostulate with the madman. It is for ever to be regretted that the unfortunate lady to whom this ruffian was so brutally and selfishly attached did not also try to reason with the man who professed to 'love her.' Instead she presumed too much on her woman's prerogative, and on the supposed civility of so-called 'gentlemen.'

"She laughed aloud at the threats of Monsieur Anatole Lomotte, and he answered by stabbing her to the heart. She died about an hour afterwards, but never spoke again as all collectively; there was present by pure accident the family resident physician of the Earl of Hartbury; prompt assistance was rendered, but the unfortunate lady only lingered about two hours. She never again spoke distinctly. A few wild, incoherent expressions were all that she gave utterance to."

The article went on to state that Monsieur Anatole had not been found. He had been assistant French master at a certain large grammar school in the County of Surrey; but he had left the town some twelve months previous to this sudden attack upon his sweet-heart; it had been supposed that he had sailed for America.

Indeed, tidings of his death had reached his few acquaintances in this country seven months back. Nobody knew where to search for him; he had not left any trace behind him; not a single individual knew anything about him. And so, in the course of a few weeks, the matter dropped.

Miss Germain was a lady without a single relation in the world; her warmest and most attached friends had been Lady Melrose and her daughters. No inquiries that Lord Melrose made led to any result whatever, and so the matter dropped. Leontine read the papers, listened to all the remarks that were made, and wondered with a great wonderment.

"It is mostly false," she said to herself, in dismay. "Miss Germain spoke most coherently in French. That Doctor Finncan does not suppose that I understood what passed, but I did."

Leontine dwelt upon the passionate, parting words of the dying woman. She remembered that she had told Doctor Finncan that he was sacrificing to an unholy and unclean idol (strange, ever to be remembered words), and then she had declared the depth of her love for this doctor. She had told him that on the eternal shore her spirit would await the coming of his. And these words were all ignored—were called incoherent. She had seemed to forget utterly her lover Anatole, by whose hand, report said, she had died.

"I must have been half mad if all that I saw and heard on that terrible night was my fancy," said Leontine to herself. "I know that somebody crept into my room while I slept and laid murderous fingers on my throat. I know that my sudden awakening startled the intended murderer, and I saw the wicked wretch glide into the closet afterwards. I am confident that I saw the evil being come stealthily out of the room and glide along the corridor in the grey morning light. I know that everybody to

whom I have told that story laughs me to scorn for a fanciful dreamer; but I am nevertheless assured in my own mind that there is a darker secret—a deeper mystery than anybody knows of connected with Miss Germain's cruel death. Some day that hideous secret will be revealed to the whole world; a loud voice will proclaim it from the housetops. I am sure of this."

And poor Leontine resumed the round of her daily toil, took up the coarse home-spun threads of her daily life, and wove them patiently into the commonplace routine of her toilsome, monotonous existence.

CHAPTER VI.

THE HANDSOME LODGER.

Love took up the glass of Time
And held it in his glowing hands;
All the moments lightly shaken
Ran themselves in golden sands.

T. H. W.

ATHELSTANE RODNEY saw nothing of pretty Leontine for several weeks. He had no excuse for intruding into the untidy room of Mrs. Melrose. His duties at Cambridge Cloisters were not to begin till the end of October, when the pupils were to re-assemble, but he had to study law and prepare for the lectures of the approaching winter.

The rooms at number fifteen, St. Charles Street, were of fair size, but there were only three apportioned for the use of Mrs. Rodney, her maid, Miss Parsons, and her son Athelstane. The maid and mistress occupied one sleeping-room, the other, which commanded a view of the grim but rather barren back gardens of some genteel houses, was Athelstane's.

Here he sat and read and wrote and made sketches, and wondered which path would lead him soonest to fame, and in which field he should the soonest win the prizes of life. Yes, his talents were versatile.

It was strange that he should feel within him at one and the same time the desire to rise at the bar, to stand up for the defence of the oppressed, or with the will and the conscious power of rectitude to denounce and accuse the oppressor. It was a sign that his soul and mind were comprehensive in their grasp, that he believed himself instinctively to be qualified to learn all this, and at the same time to revel in the enchanted dreamland of art.

The walls of his homely chamber were covered with his water-colour drawings; his portfolio was full of scraps and sketches which showed power and exquisite fancy. Surely the germs of genius were there if the flower had not yet blossomed.

"Which shall I be, lawyer or painter?"

He asked himself the question aloud; he had been hard at work all that day among his law books; he had hardly given himself time to dine with his fastidious mother at five o'clock. He listened and heard the clock in the neighbouring church strike eight. It was an October night, bright and keen; the stars were all a twinkle in the dark blue heaven; his fire had sunk low; his candles were burning dim.

"I will go out and walk," he said. "How lonely I feel. I have nobody to walk with. It is too late for the theatres. My mother is by this time half asleep in the arm-chair—half asleep and very cross. There is a girl in this very house—a girl with a lovely face, whom I promised my mother not to love, but I said that I would take her out to theatres. Why not? Why should two young souls pine apart because some elderly people have disagreeable tempers and what they call sensitive nerves? I will go down and try my luck with pretty Miss Melrose and her ridiculous, broken-down, gentleman father. Parsons says he is insane, and fancies himself a lord. I feel reckless to-night, inclined for a bottle of wine, cigars and music, and a soft voice singing love songs to me in the twilight. Ah, I begin to long for open French windows and velvet smooth lawns, and cushioned chairs of silken damask, and the flow of graceful robes, and beyond a vista through the folding doors,

where I see a large, luminous lamp and Dresden cups glisten, and powdered footmen glide about, and the aroma of the coffee is delicious, and then I hear someone touch the piano, and a grand theme fills the luxurious suite of rooms. Beethoven or Mozart is speaking from the ebony and gold piano beyond. Is this a reminiscence of the luxuries and refined pleasures of Wolvermoor?—Wolvermoor, to which I might have been heir if I had been as clever as Horace. Well, I think I ought to be quite ashamed of myself, but I will run downstairs and try my luck with the Melrose family. That girl with whom I am not to fall in love has a sweet face."

It was eight o'clock, and the three little Melroses were in bed. It was a fine night, but chill, and a small fire burnt in the grate of the shabby sitting-room. Leontine had just swept up the hearth, and now she stood on the faded rug looking dreamily into the fire. Her father was in his usual place stretched full length on the shabby sofa; her step-mother was engaged in the manufacture of a bonnet. The materials with which it was to be made were cheap black silk and cheaper scarlet ribbons.

Mr. Melrose had fallen asleep, and his newspaper had dropped on the floor. There came a loud tap on the door. Instead of calling out "Come in," which would have awakened her father, Leontine walked to the door and opened it gently. There stood the tall, handsome lodger "whose mother was so terribly proud."

Ever since the first arrival of the Rodneys in St. Charles Street, now some weeks ago, Leontine had felt shy and anxious to avoid them. There is an instinct that speaks strongly in all young honest and ardent souls, and tells them when they have met what Longfellow in one of his most charming prose sketches calls "the magician," that is the one human being whose words will always have power to charm, whose voice grows into sweeter and sweeter music the longer we listen to it, whose eyes gleam upon us like sunshine, filling our hearts with gladness—the being in short whom our prophetic souls tell us that we shall one day love if we see him or her too often.

Leontine had never admitted to herself one tenth portion of these possibilities. All she knew and felt was that Mr. Rodney was a thorough gentleman—handsome, courteous, and with bright, kind, merry eyes, that his mother was cold, repelling and haughty, and evidently was desirous to keep Leontine at a distance from herself and her son, and Leontine, who had her gentle pride, her maidenly reserve, was anxious to keep out of the way of this very possible magician. She blushed a lovely brilliant blush when she saw Athelstane. He bent his head to her courteously.

"May I come in, Miss Melrose?"

"Certainly."

She spoke with a certain reserve. Athelstane was only a few years older than Leontine, but he was a man; he had already mixed a little in society; he had read much for his age, and he knew much more of the world than our heroine. He quite understood that this cold reserve of Leontine's was the manifestation of the natural resentment which she felt at his mother's haughtiness. Also down deep in his man's heart there may have lurked the conviction that if he chose he might win the heart of Leontine Melrose.

He told himself that he had not the least wish to do this. Leontine was good and beautiful, and doubtless gifted and accomplished, but she was not his ideal; she was not the woman with dark eyes, full of passionate fire, and red lips, and such a smile as he had only seen in his dreams; he was romantic enough to believe that he should never love until he met this dream woman.

Meanwhile he felt sure that Leontine would prove a most charming and delightful companion, and he was anxious to secure her companionship as frequently as possible. Mr. Melrose woke up when he heard the lodger's step

upon the floor—woke up and started to his feet, and bowed courteously to him.

"Pray be seated?" said the claimant to the title of Melrose, politely.

Athelstane first bowed to Mrs. Melrose, who hurried away the bonnet with its red ribbons into a work-basket with a cover, and then he sat down upon one of the very oldest and shabbiest cane-seated chairs that the room afforded, and he at once frankly plunged into the subject that for the moment lay nearest his heart.

"I am so isolated, Mr. Melrose," he said, "here in this suburb, I have not an acquaintance. Doctor Thorne's pupils will re-assemble in ten days, and then, perhaps, I may not feel so disconsolate. As it is, I have come to throw myself upon your compassion, and to beg you to allow me to spend an hour now and then of an evening with you and your family?"

"Sir," responded Leontine's father, with a flourish of his white hand, "I am only a poor clerk in a lawyer's office. I have neither lands nor gold, nor servants. I ought to have all, but I have neither. You see how poor a place my sitting-room is. I have nothing to entertain a gentleman, with neither wines, nor music, nor any other society than that of my wife and children. If you can find any pleasure in associating, I will not say with humble individuals, for we are not humble, but with individuals so humbly placed, you are welcome. At the same time, sir, you must distinctly understand that we all refuse to be patronised. We are poor, Mr. Rodney, but we are very proud."

"My dear sir," answered Athelstane, with his frank laugh, "let us put all pride and poverty considerations away from us as completely as possible. I am poor compared with those who are my equals and relations. I do not know that I have much pride. I hope not; it is one of the ugliest qualities that can disfigure a human creature, in my opinion. You say you have no music; but does not your daughter, Miss Melrose, play superbly and give lessons?"

"She does," replied Mr. Melrose, with another wave of his white hand. "She learnt in her poor mother's time, and at the Ladies' College in this neighbourhood, where she completed her education, but she has not the advantage of a piano at home."

"May I hire one?" asked Athelstane, "and will you let it be played in your room? and may I come down and listen to the playing of Miss Melrose, and to her voice? I also sing; also I have a violin which can be made to speak as an accompaniment to the piano. The winter is coming on; we are all in the house together; a little relaxation after the fatigues of the day is quite necessary for everybody."

"Mrs. Rodney will not like it," said Leontine, speaking on the impulse of the moment and in spite of herself. "I am quite—quite sure Mrs. Rodney will not like it."

She looked beautiful with that rich flush on her cheek, and with her eyes glittering. Poor Athelstane was completely taken aback. He knew quite well that his mother would not like this arrangement, but his will was strong, his spirit was high; opposition and difficulties only made him more determined to have his own way.

"If my mother tells you herself that she has no objection to this arrangement," said he, looking with his earnest dark eyes entreatingly at Leontine, "will you consent to allow me to send the piano in?"

"Yes, Mr. Rodney," said Leontine, with a smile. "I shall then be very glad."

And it all came to pass just as the self-willed young gentleman desired before a week was over the heads of the dwellers at number fifteen, St. Charles Street. Mrs. Rodney was a determined woman, but Athelstane had even more persistence of purpose. She liked her own way, but Athelstane managed to get his. He told his mother that unless she allowed him to sing duettes with that pretty Leo, as her father called her, he would go and live by himself in chambers in London, so Mrs. Rodney ceased all opposition, and the piano made its appearance in the shabby parlour of the Melrose family;

and thus it came to pass that Athelstane Rodney held out his man's hand and led Leontine into an enchanted country, where everything she saw was strange and beautiful.

She was like the princess in the fairy tale who wanders through a forest whose trees are loaded with precious stones and pearls, whose rivulets flow over sands of purest gold. All the houses which she sees are lordly castles or cottages, so sweetly picturesque, so clothed in lovely flowers round each diamond-paved lattice, that any one of them might have been chosen for a very abode of love.

Outwardly there was nothing very remarkable in the intercourse of this young man and this young maiden. Athelstane never made love to the maiden with the Madonna-like face and the pale, golden hair. He was conscious—deeply conscious—of her sweetness, her beauty, and the innocent charm of her manner; but then she was not his dream-woman, not the Syren who had so often visited him in his sleep, and maddened him with the fire of her dark eyes.

Leontine sat for him of a Saturday afternoon, which was her holiday and his also—sat for him in the little drawing-room of his mother so primly furnished "on the new hire system," and he showed that he understood something of the truth and tenderness of her nature by the part he persuaded her to pose for: a very young wife waiting for news of her husband who is absent in the field of battle, listening to the names of the killed and wounded which an old gentleman reads out from a newspaper.

Rodney intended to send this painting to the Academy in hopes of its being accepted. Mrs. Rodney admitted now that Leontine was modest and amiable. She invited her to remain to tea, and she even told her that she hoped the day would come when the old Earl of Hartbury would acknowledge Mr. Melrose to be Lord Melrose, and his lawful heir.

Yes, poor Leontine was now in the enchanter's country; she had met the magician. Life seemed to her a garden filled with the perfume of violets and roses, and cheered by the melody of the nightingale. She did not know that this was love who had come wandering in the guise of a lost angel to the door of her dingy home, where she had taken him in, and forthwith the humble dwelling had become an enchanted palace.

All she knew was that when she sat down to the piano night after night and played melodies or dreamy themes of the great masters amid which the music of Athelstane's violin seemed to wander like a sparkling stream through a verdant land, she felt unspeakably happy, a great peace, a majestic repose seemed to have come into her life. All her restlessness was calmed. She was too young, too ignorant of the world and of her own heart to understand what all this meant. All day long, whether she was teaching her pupils or travelling in the train, she remembered the happy evening she had last passed with Athelstane, and she looked forward to the next.

He always seemed so delighted to be with her; he paid such attention to all she said; he lent her such delightful books; he sent her presents of fruits and flowers; and the year waned and Christmas approached. In a week the pupils of Doctor Thorne, who had re-assembled in October, would disperse for a six weeks' Christmas vacation. Leontine was to have a fortnight's holiday from the Saturday before Christmas Day.

"We will go to the theatres," said Athelstane to her on the Friday night. "Your father will let you come with me and your brother, Caesar."

Caesar had lately found employment as clerk in the city at a salary of fifteen shillings a week. On this the poor boy managed to support himself in lodgings.

"And you must come to a ball," pursued Athelstane; "there is a nice one at the Hall. The tickets are a guinea each. I will take you and Mrs. Melrose, if you will come."

Mr. William Melrose coughed in a peculiar way.

"You are very kind to Leontine, Mr. Rodney," he said.

And then Rodney felt hot and very uncomfortable, and Leontine felt a cold chill strike to her heart.

"I am so sorry," said Athelstane, "but you see I can't refuse the invitation of my uncle, Sir Robert; it is quite a command. It is the first time I have been invited there for six months, during which time I have not once seen my brother. My mother is going to visit her sister, who is the wife of a doctor at Maidstone in Kent, and I am off to Yorkshire this afternoon by the night mail."

His tongue said "I am sorry," but his dark, handsome eyes shone with hope and excitement. Naturally enough, he was delighted to escape from the dullness and monotony of his life. Wolvermoor was one of the jolliest and most splendid of English country seats. Leontine walked to the window. She knew that her pale, agitated face would tell tales. She looked out into the dull street where the rain was plashing, and with the unreasonable vehemence of disappointed love in early youth, she wished that the same wintry rain might soon be falling on her own grave.

For this sudden awakening had been fearful; she not known that she passionately loved Rodney until he told her that he was going away, and in the same moment that she discovered that he was the sole joy of her life she discovered also that to him she was of no more real importance than one of the pretty duettes he had played with her, one of the bouquets of flowers which he had given to her, and which were now faded and forgotten.

"I hope you will enjoy yourself, Mr. Rodney," said Leontine, with a little brave smile, holding out her hand to the man who would always remain her ideal hero.

Athelstane pressed her hand warmly. "How jolly it would be," he said, with a gay laugh, "if you also were invited to spend Christmas at Wolvermoor; but we can't have everything."

Alone in a first-class carriage: one of Athelstane's fastidious crotchets was a dislike to travel in any but first-class carriages. It was night and raining heavily; the train was flying along a moorland, desolate country; presently it would stop at a small station to take up passengers, and then the next station it stopped at would be one called Pengalt, where a carriage would take Athelstane on to Wolvermoor, the seat of his uncle, Sir Robert Rodney. Did any memory of Leontine's sweet pale face and brave smile haunt him? If so he drove it away.

"I could not love anyone enough to marry her unless it was the syren of my dreams."

The loud, shrill, hideous shriek of the engine gave notice of a station near at hand. Soon the train stopped. What a mere shed the station was, and how the rain was falling. Were there any passengers? One, a lady, closely veiled, and wrapped in a huge fur cloak. The porter opened the door of Athelstane's carriage.

The lady entered, took her place, and the train went on again into the storm and darkness of the night. All at once Athelstane's fellow passenger threw up her veil, and the light of the carriage illuminated her almost unearthly beauty. The young man uttered a low cry. He had met his fate; he had met the dream-woman—the ideal of his soul.

A wild, impassioned feeling possessed him; his blood raced madly in his veins. Strange, incomprehensible irony of fate, he had met the being whom he had longed to meet ever since he had attained to man's estate; and now he would have given all he possessed not to have met her, for he felt that henceforth his liberty, his pride, his manhood, his will must all bow down and worship at the shrine of a desperate and maddened and unreasoning passion. And the train rushed on over the moorland and through the night storm.

(To be Continued.)

SCIENCE.

PHOTOGRAPHIC PATTERNS.

ONE of the silk manufacturing firms of Lyons, France, are introducing the production of photographic impressions on stuffs. They sent to a recent meeting of the Photographic Society several pieces of silk with a variety of photographic pictures printed thereon, including, among others, a number of large medallions representing pictures of the old masters. The length of the specimens thus exhibited is stated as being no less than 131 feet. The process by which they are produced is not given, but it is believed that the prints are made with salts of silver.

GELATINE.

GELATINE, it is said, has a peculiar action on gum; if gum be added to gelatine, and the mixture sensitised with ammoniacal potassium bichromate, the behaviour of the latter substance is very little altered by the addition of the former. Its solubility in hot water is somewhat increased, and to obtain the same degree of insolubility for the image as with pure gelatine the exposure must be longer. But if the mixture be acidulated with acetic acid, the film after exposure and desiccation is less soluble than one consisting of chromated gelatine only with acetic acid. Gum, therefore, renders an acid solution of gelatine less soluble, and the reason for this is believed to be that glutin and arabic acid form a compound solid only with difficulty. Borax thickens a gelatine solution, and the alkaline reaction of the same substance tends to render the chromated gelatine more insoluble. Calcium nitrate gives to gum an enormous power of adhesiveness.

EUROPEAN RAILWAY SPEEDS.

A PAPER has been published in Germany showing the different rates of velocity at which railway trains travel in different countries. According to this table, the swiftest runs are in England, between London and Dover, London and York, London and Hastings, where the average reaches 80 kilos—50 miles—an hour. In Belgium some trains travel as fast as 67 kilos—nearly 42 miles. The express trains from Paris to Bordeaux, Orleans line, average 63 kilos—39½ miles; the same speed is attained by the express trains between Berlin and Cologne. Between Bologna and Brindisi the average maximum is 50 kilos—nearly 31½ miles. The average Austrian express speed is from 40 to 48 kilos—25 to 30 miles. On the Moscow and St. Petersburg line one travels at the rate of 42 kilos—nearly 27 miles—per hour; the same speed is observed in Switzerland between Geneva and Lausanne, and between Zurich and Romanshorn. But on the other Swiss lines one must be content with a slower pace. Thus from Zurich to Basel the highest speed is 38 kilos, and between Basel and Berne, 34—namely, between Soleure and Bergdorf the moderate gait of 25 kilos, or a little more than 15½ miles an hour, is observed. There are in Switzerland no purely "through" trains.

A JAPANESE student called on a young married lady, and was invited to call again soon. He called again in about an hour. This was, perhaps, Jap flattery, if so it certainly outdoes European civilisation.

A few years since a nobleman had a chest all locked up, but marked, "To be removed first in case of fire." After his death the chest was opened by the executors, supposing of course that valuable documents or deeds of property, rich jewellery, or costly plate would be found in it. But all they found was the toys of his little child that had gone before him. Dear objects to him were the toys of his little child.



[AN IMPORTANT LETTER.]

THE COST OF CORA'S LOVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Clitiae Cranbourne," "The Golden Bowl,"

"Poor Loo," "Bound to the Trawl,"

"Fringed with Fire," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE BETTER PART OF VALOUR.

Yes, loving is a painful thrill,
And not to love more painful still;
Yet surely 'tis the worst of pain
To love and not be loved again.

The day on which the young men were to sail for Mexico was a warm and brilliant one and Dick Marsden was in the wildest of spirits. He was excited at the idea of outwitting Inez and her uncle for a time, and he was delighted at the prospect of travelling with his cousin Walter for his companion.

But he was very discreet with it all; he said good-bye to his sister and Inez and her mother and went away accompanied by his father and Walter, who were to go on board with him as though his journey was to be made quite alone.

It was some two or three hours after they had started that Inez de Castellaro, in a sentimental frame of mind, stole into the apartment that Walter had used as a sitting-room and study, for the hammock along on one side of it scarcely gave the place the appearance of a bed-room. As she walked into it a strange sense of bareness and desolation oppressed her, and she looked round the room, nervously to see if the furniture had been removed.

No, it was all there, everything that she had noticed previously, even to a couple of large

trunks securely bound and padlocked, standing in one corner of the apartment. Still the curious appearance of desertion remained, and trying to discover the cause of it, she noticed that the books, papers, pipes, caps, slippers, and the thousand and one treasures that a bachelor manages to collect about him, had all mysteriously disappeared, and it was this that made the place look like a disused room rather than one in present occupation.

For a time Inez looked about her puzzled and bewildered, not knowing exactly what to make of the change. Then a sudden suspicion flashed upon her, and she began eagerly to examine the fastenings of the trunks. These, instead of allaying her anxiety, only helped to increase it, for not only were the boxes secured, but the locks and other fastenings were actually sealed as though to show anyone who might be tempted to tamper with them that it was not to be done without the certainty of detection.

"He is gone with Dick!" exclaimed Inez in a passion of rage. "Oh, the coward! the poltroon! the dastard! This is his vaunted bravery! This is the way in which he wished to meet Castellaro. By heaven, if he ever comes within my power again, he shall pay for this day's work and that right dearly."

So she raved and stormed for a time, reviling the man for whom she entertained such a wild, unruly passion, until exhausted with her own violence, her mood changed and she began to moan and weep and sob, and was rapidly drifting into a violent fit of hysterics, when her maid heard the noise and came to ascertain the cause of it, followed by Donna Lola Marsden.

Perhaps the fear of betraying herself and her schemes to her mother, more than any other cause, helped to revive the girl and induced her to put some restraint upon her emotions, for she soon subdued her sobs, and declining to give any explanation, or reason for them, went off to her own room, where she shut herself in, refusing even to allow her confidential servant to follow her. This necessary restraint upon herself did her good, and enabled her to review her present

and future position more calmly than she might otherwise have done.

First of all, Walter might not be going to Mexico, and if he were, he evidently meant to return to Lima, so that the triumph she had looked forward to, though deferred, was as certain as ever. Yes, she assured herself, he would come back. Anxiety to obtain possession of his father's papers would outweigh all thought of personal danger and aversion to herself and she had not yet relinquished the sweet hope of winning his love.

Absence from that English girl must make him turn to her, she argued, so after considering the subject from various points of view, she came to the conclusion that the course of events might really be in her favour after all.

And meanwhile Dick and Walter, accompanied by Mr. Marsden, had travelled to Callao, taken a boat and been rowed out to the "Eros," a fine steamship that would call at Manzanillo on her way to San Francisco.

It was with no pleasant feelings that our hero left Peru, even though he hoped soon to return again. There is a world of philosophy and wisdom in the prudent maxim, which the great satirist, Butler, embodied in his famous couplet,

He that flies may fight again,
Which he can never do that's slain,

And it has lost nothing of its truth and freshness even now, though Demosthenes expressed exactly the same sentiment twenty centuries before Butler was born.

But no one will be inclined to envy the feelings of the man who is compelled to act as though he believed discretion to be the better part of valour, and poor Walter in his bodily weakness fretted and fumed at having to take a step which to his own mind seemed like an act of cowardice.

He was daily getting stronger, it is true, but it would be some time before he regained his usual robust vigour, and if Castellaro sent for him in the meantime, as he most probably would do,

the contest, whether carried on by words or blows, must necessarily again be an unequal one, therefore he had no alternative but to get beyond the reach of his enemy until he could meet him on equal terms.

I am inclined to think that his recollection of his last meeting with the revolutionist urged and reconciled him more than anything else could do to the step he was obliged to take, and the secrecy he was obliged to practice. The memory of his own utter helplessness, his inability to move or in any way defend himself when the man who had murdered his father stood over him, dagger in hand, and when nothing but a reckless taunt arrested the gleaming knife, haunted Walter's mind continually.

A man does not live through such a scene and forget it easily, or quickly rally from its effects, and it had become a kind of nightmare to the young man, visiting his dreams and making him pass through the same bewildering horror over and over again, until he almost felt as if he were haunted.

It had not affected him so much at the time of its occurrence, in consequence of the half-dreamy condition the fever had thrown him into, as it did afterwards when he was able to realise the danger he had so narrowly escaped, and he now felt as though he never could regain his usual health and strength until he was out of the reach of a summons from Castellaro.

So here he is on board the "Eros," feeling like a fugitive, and looking with gloomy dislike upon the city which only a few weeks ago he had thought the loveliest place his eyes had ever rested upon.

"Mind you take care of each other, and don't be in a hurry to return," Mr. Marsden is saying as he stands with the two young men upon the deck; "remember that neither of you have brothers, so for the sake of those who love you don't go risking your lives for nothing."

"Don't be alarmed on our account, father, we are both of us much too prudent for anything of that kind."

His father shook his head doubtfully, then said:

"You will write often and let me and your grandfather know how you are getting on?"

"Yes; but I don't suppose we shall be back for a few months."

Then the time for parting came; they shook hands and Mr. Marsden returned to his boat, while the "Eros" slowly began her voyage, the banker, at a safe distance, waving farewell signals to his son and nephew and big Nell, as they stood on deck, until he could no longer distinguish them.

Onward the "Eros" went, the sun blazing fiercely overhead, the shore, green and red and rocky, gradually fading away in the distance, while great flocks of sea-gulls flew screaming in the vessel's wake.

Chinese sailors in blue dresses glide noiselessly to and fro about the deck, and the "walking beam" of the great engine moves up and down with monotonous regularity, carrying the "Eros" and its precious freight farther and farther away from civilisation and safety with every stroke it makes.

For this, it will be remembered, was early in January, 1872, and Mexico had not recovered from the state of anarchy and insecurity that had followed the murder of the Emperor Maximilian. It was a memorable year in the history of Peru, for on the 22nd of July of that year the President of the Republic was murdered in his own palace.

Now, however, when Dick and Walter leave the capital, it is seven months earlier, and though men like Castellaro had for years been fomenting revolution and rebellion, little heed was paid to the signs of the times, and when the Reign of Terror actually came, its advent was as sudden and as unexpected as the upheaval of an active volcano in the midst of the city of Lima could have been, and the inhabitants were as little prepared to meet the emergency.

Nothing of any importance occurred to our friends on their journey northwards. The heat in the vicinity of the Equator was intense, and

Walter in his weakened condition felt it terribly, and for a day or two Dick was afraid that his cousin was about to have a relapse, but this danger passed away when the weather became somewhat cooler, and after a favourable voyage of twelve days they were aroused on the morning of the thirteenth by the sound of a gun as they slowly steamed into the "Puerto de Manzanillo," on the western coast of Mexico.

It was pleasant to see land again and to know they would soon be upon terra firma and able to walk about in a less confined space than the deck of the "Eros," and Walter dressed with some of his old activity without needing the aid of Tim O'Grady, and ate a better breakfast than he had managed to dispose of for several weeks past.

The harbour, as they entered it, looked fresh and pretty; it had the additional advantage of being perfectly safe. It consists of two bays, the inner one being nearly land-locked; the entrance is between two lofty rocks covered with scrub and cactus, while to the north rises a kind of headland of low, thinly-wooded land, from which wave gracefully feathery heads of the coquito palm, and the whole amphitheatre is backed by blue mountains rising one above the other, till the summits of the most distant are lost in the clouds.

Facing the west stood the little town, consisting of two large warehouses with deep verandahs and red roofs, and a few dozen small houses and huts thatched with palm leaves, while the wooded hills that rise behind the houses contribute not a little to increase the beauty of the situation.

England has no consular representative in Mexico, and consequently Dick had taken care to provide himself with letters of introduction to the French and German consuls, and also to several German merchants and bankers resident in the country.

The advantage of this course was made apparent to the young men directly they landed, by the warm welcome they received from some wealthy Germans to whom letters had been sent announcing their probable arrival; they were also warmly received by the French consul. Everything was new to them, more particularly so to Walter, and after but a very brief rest, he and Dick went out to purchase "sombrosos," or palm hats, and look about them.

In the little market place half a dozen men and women were sitting in picturesque attitudes on the ground under a tree, selling fruit, peppers, beans, and queer pottery of all shapes and sizes, from blue and red dogs and images up to large water-jars.

The beach was gay with groups of pretty, black-eyed children, in bright-coloured cotton clothes, playing in the sand. Women passing along with leathern water-jars in their hands, their "rebocos" (a long dark cotton scarf which all Mexican women wear) drawn gracefully over their heads, and the right end falling over the left shoulder; while men were lounging about, as if such a low thing as work were utterly unknown in Manzanillo, dressed in pink or white cotton shirts, white trousers, the "universal broad-brimmed palm leaf" "sombbrero," with a "secape" or blanket of various colours thrown over one shoulder.

The water of the bay looked bright under the tropical sun and made our friends long for a sea bath, and big Nell was actually plunging into the sea when an ominous black fin appeared above the surface, within thirty yards of the shore, and the mastiff was hastily recalled, her master having a great objection to her serving as a meal for a shark.

Returning from their walk the young men were regaled by their new friends with Mexican chocolate, which they pronounced to be the most delicious of beverages, and as Walter was not yet equal to much exertion, he sat by a window overlooking the bay, while Dick went to make inquiries and arrangements for proceeding with their journey in the course of a day or two.

Removed from the dread of a summons from Castellaro before he was strong enough to respond to it, Walter was enjoying a sensation of

restful peace and comfort as he sat in his shaded seat looking out on the bay with all its novel and picturesque sights and sounds.

And his thoughts wandered away to Cora, and he pictured her at Lamorna, where the snow was lying deep on the ground, her ready sympathy and liberal hand giving comfort and happiness to the poverty-stricken and the oppressed. A picture not very unlike what was really taking place; but the fond lover could not see the dark cloud lowering in the distance, charged with terror and misery, and ready to expend its pent-up fury on her devoted head. And it was well for both of them that he could not, for had it been otherwise he would have hastened back, hoping by his presence to give her comfort, and to mitigate the evil, and his own work would have been left unfinished, his task unaccomplished, and the mystery of his birth might never have been revealed.

As it is, he goes on blindly, hoping, loving, and trusting, thinking that his English rose is planted in one of the fairest gardens of his own fair land, and that no trial or suffering, except that caused by his absence, can approach her.

How mistaken he is, *we already know*, but we must leave Walter for a time and hasten back over land and sea to Lamorna Castle, where the issues of life and death still hang in the balance.

CHAPTER XXVI.

LATIMER AT SEA.

Parts that none will trust,
Will that man crown, and pride that likes the dust.

LANCE LATIMER has time to breathe freely and look around him, for he is not driven to take any step that shall absolutely compromise him beyond recovery. He is not grateful for this pause in the march of events, however, and it is by no act of grace on the part of others that he obtains his respite, for there are few people in the world who would care to shield him or to do him a service. But Circumstance, which is often the strongest element in ruling the destinies of mankind, has intervened to the great advantage of Lance Latimer, and willed that everything at Lamorna Castle should for the time remain stationary.

Sir Samuel Fenton, the celebrated surgeon, had come down from London to see the noble sufferer, and after a long and patient examination had declined to operate upon him, at least for the present. No doubt the man of science considered himself as well as Lord Lamorna in coming to this decision.

The operation of trepanning, or as it is now called, trephining, is a peculiarly dangerous one, eight patients out of ten die under it, and the most skillful surgeons look upon it as their last resource—the one desperate effort to save the patient's life that may be successful when without death must be inevitable.

Under these circumstances, when all other hope is over, friends often allow the medical attendants to make the supreme effort which they are told may be successful, and though but too often it proves fatal, they feel then that all that love and science could do has been done for their loved ones.

Had Lord Lamorna been a working man, or a simple gentleman, Sir Samuel Fenton might not have hesitated, but to operate upon a man of his lordship's rank and wealth, and to fail, would be to materially injure his own reputation, because all the world would hear of it. More than this, with care and attention, the old peer's life might be saved; this, the doctor held to be the first point, reason was quite a secondary consideration; besides, if the body could become strong, and the ordinary condition of health be restored, then, if the mind were still clouded, the probability of an operation being successful would be greatly increased. Indeed it was only under these conditions that Sir Samuel would undertake it.

Lady Bellinda sighed as she listened to this decision, but she had not a word to urge against it. Her brother's life was the first consideration, though after all, life without reason with

but a doubtful blessing. Then Sir Samuel returned to town, promising to come again the following week, or to obey the summons immediately he was telegraphed for.

He had approved of all that the other doctors had done, had given instructions to the two trained nurses who had arrived as to the treatment of their patient, and had left the impression behind him that the marquise might live for another ten years, but that he would never regain the complete use of his intellectual faculties.

Cora had protested against engaging strange women as nurses to attend to her more than father, when she and Miss Ladbroke were so anxious and willing to serve him, but Lady Bellinda had no old-fashioned prejudices on this point; the knowledge and skill acquired by careful training and long practice were, in such cases, worth more than the best of good intentions, she asserted, and even Cora was convinced that she was right when the two ladies arrived, for they bore about them the stamp of being not only skilled nurses but refined gentlewomen.

"Now I remember, that is what Mary Beverly means to be," she thought, as she looked at them, attired as they were in their plain brown dresses. "I wonder if I could ever be so self-sacrificing as to devote myself to others in that way. I should have to be very miserable, and should want to get away from my own thoughts very badly, before I could do so."

Not a very good preparation for hard, self-sacrificing work, but then, it must be remembered, Cora is not yet eighteen, and her ideas of life are consequently very limited. Thus thinking, standing in the peacock drawing-room, looking out through the window at the deep snow which lay thickly upon park and trees and gardens, like a great winding-sheet covering beauty and ugliness with equal impartiality, her rich claret-coloured and fur-trimmed dress glowing brightly in the firelight, she became suddenly conscious that she was not alone, and glancing up she encountered the cold, fish-like eyes and dissipated face of Lance Latimer.

They had not met since the first night of Lord Lamorna's illness, since the time when she had surprised him at the safe turning out the pockets of the injured man's clothing. She had forgotten the circumstance and even the man himself for the time, and if she had thought about him at all it was with a vague notion that he had left the castle, and that she should be troubled by his presence no longer.

Now he stood by her side, Lady Bellinda was in some other part of the mansion, Walter and big Nell were far away in a distant land, the marquise was lying on his bed as helpless as when he was born, and, whether she liked it or not, she must listen to this man. Instinctively she felt this, and her suspicions and her dislike to him came back with greater intensity than ever, and coupled therewith was the remembrance that he knew nothing of her engagement to Walter, and was, to his own mind, at least, completely free to say what he pleased.

"We have had a heavy fall of snow," he remarked, with a glance at the whitened landscape.

"Yes," she listlessly replied, twisting Walter's ring, which she always wore, round her finger; perhaps she regarded it as a kind of talisman.

"You are very faithful to that ring. I never see your hand without it," he said, with an evil smile.

She made no reply except to close her hand as though she thought he wished to steal her treasure.

"I wonder if you would wear a ring as constantly if I gave it to you?" he next asked, attempting to take one of her small hands in his own.

"No, for I should not accept it," and she drew her hand away, stepped back a pace, and looked him calmly and coldly in the face.

"Confound her," was the man's mental comment; "one would think she had been born in the purple to see the airs she gives herself. No duchess could be more haughty, and for aught

anybody knows to the contrary she may be the last of a line of tinkers."

Aloud, however, he said:

"You are very hard on me, Cora. You know that I love you—you know that it was the dearest wish of my poor kinsman that you should be my wife; he has told me so many times. I had his permission to address you as a suitor, and I should have done so weeks ago but that I have been waiting in the hope of winning your love and of overcoming your unfounded aversion to me."

The girl listened to him with a paling face and the consciousness that a struggle was before her; then she said, oddly, and as firmly as she could:

"Papa knew I should never marry you, Mr. Latimer. Lately, since you have obtained some influence over him, he may have thought it desirable, but he knew that it would not and could not be. He knew why I wore this ring, he had consented to what it implies, and he was well aware that it would be a barrier to any other plans which he might afterwards desire to make for me. I tell you this because it closes the subject between us for ever."

Lance Latimer's face was not pleasant to look upon as he listened to these words. His pale blue eyes had a cruel gleam in them, his white, flaccid-looking face became almost green with passion, and it was only by a great effort that he could keep back an expression of the impotent rage that convulsed him.

After learning Sir Samuel Fenton's decision he had resolved upon a bold stroke of policy. He had everything to win, and looking at his present critical position dispassionately, he had nothing to lose. To all intents and purposes, as far as doing him any good would go, the marquise was virtually dead. Latimer would much rather he had been quite dead, for then a great danger would be overpast, and more than that the Lamorna property would in that case be divided, and even a small share would have been salvation to this penniless, dun-hunted wretch.

All that remained for him now was to use the blank cheques which he had abstracted some time before, with all possible expedition, and make such assertions with regard to what Lord Lamorna had promised to do for him that Lady Bellinda should feel bound to carry out some of her brother's intentions, and also, by making everyone understand how much he had to gain from his lordship's favour, silence the faintest suspicion that he had had anything to do with the dastardly attempt upon the old man's life.

His declaration to Cora was the first step he had marked out for himself. True, he was not very sanguine as to the result; but he had hitherto thought it was only Lady Bellinda's influence which had fostered, if not created, Cora's indifference towards himself, and it was like a thunderbolt to him to know that he had a successful rival.

No need to ask who that rival was. A thousand unheeded trifles now recurred to his mind to show him how blindly he had been drifting on, while Walter Smith had meanwhile won the prize which he had looked upon as sooner or later to be his own.

They were thus standing, Cora pale and agitated, but resolved to show no sign of hesitation or of fear, and Latimer with that expression of subdued rage still on his face, when Lady Bellinda came into the room. Instinctively the old woman felt that some crisis had arrived, and resolute to meet everything in her own way, she said sharply, looking from the maiden to the young man, and back again:

"Well, Cora, what has Mr. Latimer been telling you, that makes you both appear so serious? Has he been saying that he is going away?"

The girl looked up with a start, almost with a smile on her face; she knew that her ladyship's strongest desire was to drive Latimer away from the castle, without actually ordering him to go. But before she could speak, Latimer himself said:

"No, Lady Bellinda; my kinsman on the very morning of the day when he met with his accident, expressed a desire that I would always

make this house my home, and I have too much regard for his wishes to think of disobeying them."

Lady Bellinda felt as though she had received a blow in the face when she heard this. She detected a purpose in it, even if that purpose were only to annoy her, and worse still, she had not even good reason to doubt the truth of the impudent assertion made by this objectionable relation of hers; and under such circumstances how could she forbid him to remain in the house?

First of all, her brother had retained him as a guest long after she herself had expressed a dislike to him, and secondly, while the marquise lived she could not act as absolute mistress of the castle. But she would not show how she had been startled, and she said, with covert scorn:

"And was this what he was telling you, Cora?"

Again Latimer interposed.

"I was telling Miss Lyster that my cousin's wish was that she should become my wife. He told me that it was his intention I should succeed to his property, and that he would like to see me the husband of his adopted daughter. Perhaps I ought to have waited, but my feelings carried me away, and I told her," with a glance at Cora and a gasp rather than a sigh, "how I loved her."

"Ah, I see! And my brother, perhaps, dying at the time," said the old woman, with bitter contempt and meaning. "I suppose you have good reason to know that he had not yet given effect to what you are pleased to call his 'intentions' towards you by making a new will, and therefore you thought it would be well to secure his heiress without loss of time? Is that the explanation of your indecent hurry, Mr. Latimer?"

He started. Everything was willed to Cora, then, and except through her he could never hope to enjoy any of the wealth of the Lysters. He curbed himself, however, sufficiently to say:

"I was not aware that Miss Lyster was my kinsman's heiress. At all events, she cannot take the entailed estates, I believe?"

This was a feeble reply.

"The entail ends with me, and you are not likely to get them," was the keen retort. "Have you given him his answer, Cora?"

"Yes, auntie," and she gazed at Walter's ring lovingly.

"Do you intend to remain at the castle, still Mr. Latimer?" was the next question the old woman asked.

"Certainly; my kinsman might recover and want me at any moment," was the unblushing reply.

"Very well. The servants will attend to you, but Cora and I cannot ask you to favour us with your company, and this is one of the rooms which I reserve for my own private use."

Latimer flushed and winced at the old woman's scarcely disguised contempt and open rudeness. He would very gladly have gone away from Lamorna Castle, particularly if he could have been sure of getting back to it when he chose; but, though he felt convinced Lady Bellinda would not turn him out, he was equally certain she would be resolute to forbid his re-entering the house if he once left it, and he had far too much to win to imperil all for the sake of indulging in a useless display of bad temper. Just as he was about to utter some soft speech in the vain hope of turning away the bitterness of her wrath the door opened, and a servant announced:

"Mr. Fleming Cadbury."

"Show him in," said Lady Bellinda, with an inclination of the head that implied dismissal to Latimer.

Nothing loath to avoid the rector, Latimer had turned to obey the intimation; but he was not in time, for Fleming Cadbury was at the drawing-room door, and there was something in his face that made the guilty man pause to look at him.

"Yes, it is you that I want," said the rector, in stern imperious tones; "come back into the room; let the servant go."

Then turning to the astonished ladies, the excited clergyman said:

"Lady Bellinda, you will pardon me, I know, when I explain everything to you, but I am here to learn from that man what he has done with his wife."

"His wife!" repeated the two women, in utter amazement and surprise.

"It is a falsehood," exclaimed Latimer, desperate and defiant. "I have no wife; I never had one."

A frown contracted Cadbury's face. He glanced at Lady Bellinda, then at Cora, then back again, evidently hesitating and yet impatient to speak. The elder woman quickly understood him.

"Cora," she said, "go and ask Miss Ladbroke to come here, and don't come back yourself till I send for you."

The girl, with a heightened colour, obeyed, and as the door closed upon her Lady Bellinda said:

"Now, Mr. Cadbury, you can begin your story."

"I shall not remain to listen to it," said Latimer, defiantly; "the man has gone mad over some woman and I suppose accuses me of enticing her away," and he was walking towards the door when Cadbury's voice arrested him by saying:

"You had better remain. The police are outside, I have ready in my pocket a warrant for your arrest, and I shall hand it to them unless you satisfy me, and though you say you had no wife perhaps you will remember this."

He held up as he spoke a slip of paper torn from a pocket-book. It was not much in the way of evidence, perhaps, certainly nothing like a marriage certificate; but Latimer recognised it at once: the piece of paper upon which he had written his promise to re-marry Juanita immediately after the death of the Marquis of Lamorna was before him.

"Whence had the rector obtained it?" he asked himself in terror; "had Juanita's body been found, and had they taken it from her bosom?"

He shuddered as the questions presented themselves to his mind, but he uttered never a word; like a man stunned he sank on a seat, dumbly waiting for the revelation that might involve him in utter ruin. Aye, more than ruin, if a felon's death be more than ruin.

(To be Continued.)

A CLEVER WOMAN.

LADIES having vicious husbands will do well to read this. A lady found herself wedded to a gambler so confirmed that, work as hard as he might, he would always lose all his pay at faro. For a time she endeavoured to persuade him against this unhappy sport, but in vain; so, without more ado she started a gambling table on her own account, and invited her spouse to play at that. He agreed, on the condition that now and then the dulness of play should be enlivened by occasional drinks at her expense; and then, full of hope, he sat down. Here his usual bad luck followed him. The month's wages flew into possession of his thrifty wife, who laying by the sum, was ready with the table again when four more weeks' toil had furnished her better half with the means of playing.

In this way the time flew by, she always winning, until at length the gambler's wife was a wealthy woman, keeps her own carriage, and has made a tour of the world in company with her now reformed husband with their happy children.

MR. JOHN DUNN, whose services to Lord Chelmsford during the war have been invaluable, was promised by his lordship, it is said, a large estate in Zululand, about the size of a county.

SPANISH ETIQUETTE.

THE etiquette of a Spanish royal marriage is very singular. The following conjugal arrangements are found in an official order regulating the visitation of a King to a Queen of Spain, which is copied from an old and now rather scarce book, by the celebrated French Countess D'Annois, who resided in Madrid, and was received at the Spanish Court for many years.

The King of Spain sleeps in one apartment, and the Queen in another. It is thus noted in the orders—that when the King comes out of his chamber in the night to go into the Queen's he must wear his shoes like slippers, his black cloak upon his shoulders instead of a nightgown, his broquel, or buckler, fastened under his arm, and his bottle fastened by a string to the other; with this accoutrement the King has besides a long rapier in one hand and a dark lantern in the other; and in this manner he is obliged to go alone into the Queen's chamber! Remembering that the present King of Spain is again to be married in a short time, this extract may prove of some interest. When the Princess Marie Antoinette was married to the Dauphin of France (afterwards Louis XVI.), she was divested of all her clothing on arriving at the frontiers, and re-clad in French garments.

FRIENDS.

WHEN'E'R we roam afat from home
Some one with loving heart we
meet;

Some one to bless with fond caress,
As clasping friend with friend we
greet.

Some one waiting, with a mating,
For just the love we have to give;
Some hand ready, firm and steady,
To help us through each storm we
live.

Though hearts yet sigh for joys gone
by,
And fondly cling to friends our own,
E'en while we brook one parting look
The heart looks forth to friends un-
known.

Yet who would say each passing day
But dearer makes the absent seem,
Until at last, when years have passed,
Their love shines pure as starlight's
gleam.

Though for friends old, whose love un-
told
Has often been our guide and stay,
We're called to change, as wide we
range,
We would not cast the old away.

But cherish meet their memories
sweet,
And cull from Lang Syne bowers,
A beauty fair, and fragrance rare,
Some ever-blooming flowers.

As heavenly ray, at close of day,
Speaks peace and comfort to the
breast,
So absent friends a halo lend
Which cheers and soothes the soul to
rest.

M. S.

NAVAL GUNNERY.

IN firing into masses of timber, or any solid substance, that velocity which can but just penetrate will occasion the greatest shake, and tear off the greatest number of and largest splinters; consequently, in close actions, shot discharged with the full quantity of powder tears off fewer splinters than balls fired from

the same nature of guns with reduced charges. In naval actions shot intended to take effect upon the hull of an enemy should rather be discharged with a falling than with a rising side; but such pieces as may be appointed specially to act against the masts and rigging should be fired, on the contrary, with the rising motion, the aim being taken low. In all close actions the great object should be to strike as often as possible the enemy's hull. One or two twenty-four-pound shot, taking effect just below the water-line, and perhaps perforating both sides of a small vessel, will, in general, either force her to surrender or send her to the bottom, and such an injury is much more likely to be occasioned by firing with a falling than with a rising motion.

BEHIND A PANEL.

A WIDE, white forehead; above, braids knotted with a white aster; pansy-dark eyes under curled black lashes. The lovely woman's face looking out of the oriel window held Captain Gordon Somers captive.

"Come, captain!" called a voice from the water below.

He made no response to startle the girl, for she had not seen him. The cool, oval face rested on the slender hand, and she was looking dreamily over the water.

"I say, cap, what keeps you? What have you found?"

He could have strangled Low, with his impatient bellowing, for now the fair face started and flushed, and, turning, Adelaide Westerly saw the intruder in her garden.

Captain Somers stepped forth, but without his usual ease and grace, and lifted his hat.

"I beg pardon. Could we get some water here?"

"Yes, certainly. Knock at the south door, and my man will give you all you want."

She seemed startled out of an habitual serenity, yet her voice had a strange softness and sweetness.

"I—we," continued the captain, "are in search of a strange boat which got adrift from the yacht 'Mermaid' last night. We have been about here for three hours. It must have got over the bar and gone out to sea."

Low, lifting himself to look over the bank, saw how things were, and settled back resignedly in the dory.

"A small boat called the 'Dolphin'?" asked Adelaide.

"Yes."

"With a book and spyglass in it?"

"Yes," confessed Somers, ashamed of his seamanship. "I let it get away from me. I have charge of the yacht. There she is yonder," pointing to the offing.

"You will find your boat fastened to a post just inside the breakwater. My man, Stephen, picked it up last night. He is in the garden. Stay, I will call him."

She came down to the garden door—a beautiful young creature all in white—and found Captain Somers awaiting her, cap in hand. They went together down the overgrown paths, he holding the rose-vines aside to let her pass.

"I am giving you too much trouble."

"No. There is my man. Stephen!"

The old man came up with hisspade. He began telling how he had found the boat—for which the young gentleman did not care two straws, casting desperately about in his mind to learn how he was to meet Adelaide again.

She had already withdrawn to the terrace, and stood awaiting his final bow. She little dreamed the truth—sweet lady of Shalot! She was looking fixedly at the fine, strong figure, the cool, sensitive blonde face, the picturesque yachtman's dress; she had inhaled the faint fragrance of cigars, felt the magnetism of this stranger's gentle touch as he put her dress aside from the thorns; and a feeling of pain she could not express visited her pure heart as she realised

that in a minute he would be gone from her gaze.

And he went. With one backward glance from the fine blue eyes, with a gay and graceful salutation and a final call of thanks to the young lady, Captain Somers turned a bend of the rose-path and disappeared, followed by old Stephen.

"A desperate venture," he muttered, "but my only chance!"

If, while unmooring the boat, he deftly questioned the old servitor of the Westerys, old Stephen never told. But when he saw the two boats floating off shore, he chuckled over the bit of silver in his hand and muttered:

"Good luck to you, sir!"

The fair lady of Shalot went slowly back to her bower. Perhaps the pretty chamber did not then look quite beautiful. Perhaps she, too, murmured, "I am half sick of shadows." It would not be at all strange.

This girl of twenty lived a strangely isolated life. She was the last of her race, living on the estate, bequeathed to her in infancy by her dying father. A half-sister of her mother's, an aged woman called Aunt Resolve, was her only companion. She had never entered society. She knew little of the world outside the beautiful gardens and shores of the Junipers.

But for old Aunt Resolve, the girl seemed to be wasting her sweetness on the desert air. The devoted old woman idolised her. From her babyhood she had dressed, watched and tended her. Perhaps it was a mistaken fondness that relieved the heiress of all care of her estate, for it required some management to make it yield an income for the family, and Adelaide suffered from ennui. Perhaps a little care would have been good for her. But Aunt Resolve thought differently, and the girl knew nothing of the oyster-beds and the crops that were hers.

The girl stood in the rose-path again upon the following evening, her garden hat in her hand, her eyes unconsciously fixed upon the yacht "Mermaid" in the offing. She was in an unusually thoughtful mood. There had come to her for the first time the thought, whither her life was tending. To wear away the seasons from youth to age in uneventful monotony, for ever and for ever alone, her heart unoccupied, her soul unsatisfied, did not suit her. But a spell, a fate seemed upon her. Probably it would never be otherwise; and a sadness no words could express spread through all her consciousness.

A step upon the gravel. She turned and encountered the gleam of two blue eyes. Captain Somers bowed low.

"Your pardon; more missing property, Miss Westerys," he stammered.

"What is it now?" asked Adelaide, in amazed tones.

"A ring I dropped yesterday. Ah, here it is," stooping to hide a guilty blush, and immediately, with strange good fortune, discovering a diamond ring at the edge of the grass plot.

He showed it to her, a diamond quaintly set; his property for fifteen years, he said, the gift of his dead mother.

The heiress of the Junipers was as guileless as a child. She never thought of fear; and what was there to suggest it in gentle words and courtly tones? And fortunately, Captain Somers was an honest man and honestly in love.

They chatted among the rose vines for a long hour. The young man made a practical use of his time. With undue stress he told her who he was—the younger of two orphan brothers left early to find their fortunes. The elder had succeeded better than he; perhaps, because less scrupulous. It was Godfrey's yacht Gordon commanded, for he was the better sailor of the two. He had no money, but had not a vice, and the good will of all men.

And when he had gone, she found that he had left with her letters highly complimentary, recommending him to stations of trust, so that she was able to afford astonished and alarmed Aunt Resolve all the assurance she needed.

And now Adelaide was no longer alone. She had a lover.

Week after week the yacht "Mermaid"

remained in the offing. Day by day the young people floated on the smooth summer tide, or strolled in the garden, or sang at the old piano songs ringing and full of sweetness.

Perhaps no happier hearts existed under the sun. Then Godfrey Somers sent for his yacht, and Gordon must needs obey and speed North.

"Oh, Gordon, you will forget me!"

"Forget my little oriole? Never! Child, you do not know how I love you. Wear this ring for me, Adelaide."

It was rich and yellow, and bore in deeply engraved characters the word "Always." And so they parted for a few weeks, betrothed lovers.

The summer waned; but Adelaide was so happy she did not mind when the rose-petals fell and the fruit was gathered.

Aunt Resolve, who watched her constantly now-a-days, saw that she was wrapped in a dream of bliss. Her nature, of great sweetness, was alive, and her lover, and her love-life was all to her. And now, for Somers' sake—that was very plain—she began to take an interest in the tasks and plans at the Junipers.

"Where does the money come from that pays the plantation hands for their work, Aunt Resolve?"

"They have their cabins, and corn, and sweet potato patches. I pay them small wages out of the fruit crop."

"What does that consist of?"

"Strawberries, pears, peaches and grapes."

"Where are they sold?"

"I send them North, by the train."

"What buys our food and dresses?"

"The oyster beds. They are a great deal of care, I assure you."

"For you. You have the care of everything. Let me learn to help you, dear auntie—let me try to be useful."

And Adelaide grew busy, painstaking and thrifty. She was dusting an old cabinet one day, when a panel, which had always seemed secure, slipped from its groove into her hand, showing a cavity filled with compartments behind. In one was a bit of folded yellow paper. It was not worth disturbing, at first Adelaide thought.

At last, with reluctant curiosity, she drew it forth, unfolded and scanned its faded characters; and, as she read, her dark eyes dilated, her cheek paled, she caught her breath.

Aunt Resolve was counting out money on the library table. Suddenly Adelaide, all white and trembling, entered the room, the paper in her hand.

"What have you there?"

Aunt Resolve had grown suddenly ghastly at the sight of the faded scrap. She snatched at the girl's wrist and drew the paper towards her without touching it. She saw only too clearly the minute, quaint characters, clear as print though the ink was faded. Then she pushed Adelaide away and turned aside her face. The bewildered girl sank down upon the footstool at her feet.

"Oh, Aunt Resolve, what is it?"

"It is nothing," portioning off the silver with a trembling hand. "The salt marsh hay must be cut now; so go away, child, I am busy."

But the girl clung about her knees.

"Oh, this is my grandfather's name signed to this," she cried, "and I am homeless!"

"Tut, tut!"

"Am I not the last of my race? His father gained it dishonestly, he says; and when his descendants shall have dwindled to a single one, let him or her not dare to marry, but restore the estate to the rightful family, bestowing it upon the poorest member thereof," quoted the girl, the words of the paper ineffaceably stamped upon her memory.

Aunt Resolve groaned, and her hands fell from their task.

"Child, child!" she cried, "how in the world came you to find it?"

"I was dusting the cabinet. It was behind a panel that fell down. I did not dare to touch it at first. Now I have read it all, and I know what it means—what have I to do, Aunt Resolve," And now the girl stood up.

"Your father gave it to me for safe keeping. I never meant you to see it, Adelaide."

"That would have been wrong, auntie."

"No, no, dearie, you must marry and be happy."

The girl did not speak. She stood looking around the familiar room, and her eyes grew dark with agony. Evidently her resolve was taken.

"The dear old place—it seemed part of my very self. It was never before so beautiful and dear as now when it was to be my home and his. It has seemed lonely and irksome—it never would again. And now I must give it up?"

This was fixed as an unalterable law in her mind. The conditions being fulfilled which decreed it to another, the Junipers must forthwith pass into other hands.

There could be no doubt that Adelaide was heart-broken. She looked as if some terrible illness had settled upon her. Aunt Resolve was utterly shattered by the girl's state; but now Adelaide was the stronger of the two in maintaining a settled purpose.

The latter had a guardian whom she saw annually. She now wrote to him, acquainting him with the message from the deceased, and briefly relinquishing the property, as she wished him to take steps to discover the former owner of the Junipers—a process which Aunt Resolve thought would not be difficult, though she did not know them.

"I would not have it done, dear," she said, sick in bed. "I would have you live and die upon the old place. I fear—ah, I fear you will miss everything now—for Captain Somers has no home, and he will rove from and forget you! It is human nature. These long deferred marriages never turn out well. You know your marriage to him must be deferred—don't you, Adelaide?"

"Yes."

The girl uttered the one sad monosyllable, and said no more.

And now the time was flying. Captain Somers she expected daily, for he had promised to return in less than a month. She finally brought herself to write to him, and told him what had happened. He made no reply.

This added a pang. She saw plainly how it would be. He could not provide for her adequately. Such support as he could afford her—and which she would have gladly accepted, sweet if shared with him—he would not offer. She must find a home in Wales, with some of her mother's relations, and they would drift apart finally for ever. Aunt Resolve was right.

A storm set in. Day by day the rain beat about the house, and the sighing of the trees filled the girl's heart with dread. At last there came a letter from her guardian. It ran as follows:

"MY DEAR ADELAIDE,—I have been unusually fortunate in finding the rightful owner of the Junipers. He will make his appearance there Thursday, after which I will see you at an early day. LUTHER MESSENGER."

Not a word of sympathy or regret. It seemed to Adelaide as if all the world had suddenly turned her enemy.

And still another day the storm held. The Junipers tossed in the rainy wind, and the wild air had voices of cruel significance. Or was Adelaide's mind giving way under trouble? She had so anticipated such a far-reaching result, that she seemed already deep in years of suffering.

Alone, on a mournful evening, she was suddenly electrified by a coarse voice, demanding:

"Where is this 'ere woman that's been a-keepin' me out of my lawful rights? I just want to set my eyes on her!"

Was her home to go to such people? Her heart sank, but the heavy step came on. Suddenly the door was flung open, and, smiling there stood Captain Somers.

"Dearest, I have come!"

He caught her hands and drew her to her feet. She uttered a cry of delight, then broke into a

sobbing sigh as she felt herself clasped to his breast.

"Oh, only to part, my beloved!"

"Not at all, my dear one; for I am the master of the Junipers. By your grandfather's decree, which bestows it upon the poorest member of the defrauded family, it becomes mine; and next month sees our wedding!"

And it was even so.

R. H.

PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS.

THE DRAMA.

PROMENADE CONCERTS, COVENT GARDEN.

At Covent Garden Madame Essipoff's reception was most enthusiastic. This brilliant pianist was a stranger to many of those present, but her very fine playing of Beethoven's "Emperor" concerto in E flat speedily established her on good terms with those who had not heard her before, while those familiar with her exceptional talent were heartily glad again to welcome her. In the second part, Madame Essipoff played solos by Schubert and Tansig with charming effect. The selection from "Carmen," cleverly arranged by Mr. Alfred Cellier, was received with much favour. Mr. Burnett, the leader of the orchestra, introduced a clever piece in imitation of the mandoline, written for the stringed instruments pizzicato. This was another decided success, the band playing it with spirit. The vocalists were Madame Antoinette Sterling, Mlle. Dyna Beumer, Mr. Barton McGuckin, and Mr. Maybrick, these accomplished vocalists being heard with delight by the vast audience. A clever new waltz, composed by M. Albert, the excellent violoncellist, was received with much applause. Mr. Hamilton Clarke's gavotte, the overture to "Semiramide," and the Coronation March from Meyerbeer's opera "Le Prophète" were also included in the programme; nor must we omit to mention the valuable services of the Coldstream band.

"Duty," is the title chosen for the new play to be produced at the Prince of Wales's Theatre next Saturday. In the cast will be Mr. Arthur Cecil, Mr. H. B. Conway, Mr. Forbes-Robertson, Mr. Kemble, Mrs. Hermann Vezin, Mrs. John Wood, Miss Gerard, and Miss Marion Terry. Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft will not play in the new piece.

The Philharmonic Theatre will be reopened, on October 4th, under the direction of Mr. Alfred Young. Variety entertainments of a superior order are to be presented, and ballet is to be made an important feature in the programme. Mr. Young has had experience at the Metropolitan and Canterbury, and we have no doubt of his success.

New police regulations have been issued, according to which all Berlin Music Halls will be compelled to give twenty-four hours' notice of the programme of their entertainments, with the words of all songs and dialogues. No performance is to be allowed before seven or after eleven in the evening.

Several of the London managers are already preparing their Christmas pantomimes. At Covent Garden the subject is "Sinbad the Sailor," at the Surrey "Aladdin," and at the Standard "Bluebeard," so it will be seen that the old familiar stories are still preferred to the fairy tales of later time.

The St. James's Theatre is having great alterations made by Lord Newry and Mr. Hare, the internal arrangements having undergone a complete transformation. There are new passages, new corridors, and new entrances. A successful inaugural career to Mr. Hare and Mr. and Mrs. Kendal is looked upon as a certainty.

They will open with Mr. Godfrey's comedy "The Queen's Shilling."

Mr. Barrett will open the pretty Court Theatre in Sloane Square this day (Saturday), with Victorien Sardou's masterpiece "Fernande." The company is exceptionally fine. It includes Mr. Charles Coghlan, Mr. Barrett, Mr. Price, and Mr. Anson, Miss Amy Roselle, Miss Rosa Kenney, Mrs. Leigh Murray, and Miss Heath (Mrs. Wilson Barrett). Messrs. Gordon and Harford are painting the scenery, and Mr. Joubert has been entrusted with the appointment. Mr. Robert Stoepel will be the musical director.

Mr. Irving returns to reopen the Lyceum on Saturday next.

Mrs. Bateman will reopen Sadler's Wells in October, with "Rob Roy." The new stage is more than 50 feet deep, and the roof has been raised so as to permit the production of plays requiring great scenic effects.

SICK HEADACHE.

This complaint is the result of eating too much and exerting too little. Nine times out of ten the cause is, in fact, that the stomach was not able to digest the food last introduced into it, either from its having been unsuitable or excessive in quantity. It is said a diet of bread and butter, with ripe fruits or berries, with moderate, continuous exercise in the open air, sufficient to keep up a gentle perspiration, would cure almost every case in a short time. Two teaspoonfuls of powdered charcoal in half a glass of water, and drank, generally gives instant relief. We are inclined to think that the above remedies may do in some, but not in all cases. A sovereign remedy for this disease is not easily found.

Sick headache is periodical, and is the signal of distress which the stomach puts up to inform us that there is an over-alkaline condition of its fluids; that it needs a natural acid to restore the battery to its normal working condition. When the first symptoms of a headache appear, take a teaspoonful of lemon-juice clear, fifteen minutes before each meal, and the same dose at bed-time; follow this up until all symptoms are passed, taking no other remedies, and you will soon be able to go free from your unwelcome nuisance. Many will object to this because the remedy is too simple, but many cures have been effected in this way.

FRANK HARTLEY;

—OR—

LOVE'S TRIALS AND TRIUMPH.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Old Rufford's Money," "Vincent Luttrell," "A Fight for Freedom," &c., &c.

CHAPTER IX.

THE RETURN.

There be perils of waters, winds, and rocks.

LAWYER LOVEL was not a man to draw back his hand from the plough when he had once set the furrow. Why he had so suddenly decided to take the step which his letter disclosed, will in due time be made clear; suffice it to say, the cautious practitioner felt satisfied he should obtain justice for the widow and the orphan, even if he failed in bringing home criminality to those who had wronged them.

Time wore on, the "merry month of May" had come to glad the earth with the carol of birds and the sweet odours of flowers. Lawyer Lovel had hastened on the suit to the utmost of

his ability. Learned doctors of the civil law had been instructed in the ecclesiastical court, voluminous pleadings were drawn, affidavits filed, and all the cumbrous machinery of the dusty and mysterious canon law set in motion by the doctors and proctors on both sides, when an event as unexpected as overwhelming changed the whole course of the proceedings in a manner that it is now our privilege to disclose.

Lawyer Lovel was walking in his garden at an early morning hour, when he became aware of a man, sunburnt and ragged, who, having passed down the side lane which led from the High Street to Mr. Lovel's stables and poultry-yard, was making signs to the lawyer to draw nearer the fence and to speak to him. Mr. Lovel did so.

The stranger was a stalwart man, bronzed by exposure to the weather, and clad in the coarsest of seamen's clothing. On his curly head he wore a broad Vicksburg hat, and his fine manly throat was fully exposed above the collarless guernsey that formed his only underclothing. Mr. Lovel, he knew not why, looked at him with unusual interest.

After a few seconds the old man was struck with speechless amazement.

"I don't wonder that Mr. Lovel, his oldest friend, does not know Frank Hartley!" said the young man with a glistering eye.

"Gracious heavens!" exclaimed the lawyer. "For the sake of those you love best do not present yourself suddenly lest a too violent access of joy should bring sorrow. I will come out to you," and the old man hurriedly unlatched the side gate.

"Hasten into the public-house, and I will follow. How fortunate that I was the first to meet you."

"I have watched the house since a little after sunrise that you might be the first to whom my return should be made known. What would have been my first question was last night answered in Hull, where I learned the sad tidings of my father's death. And now for my second; where is my beloved Mary, and how has she borne the untimely death of her dear father. Do not start with surprise. That cruel murder, in all its horrors, was whispered to me amid storm and tempest thousands of miles away, by the lips of a dying man."

"Horrible! I see your impatience. Mary Greenfield, lovely, good and kind as ever, is now, after strange vicissitudes, under the shelter of my roof-tree, and so too is her worthy mother, who has also had her trials. But my absence will be noticed. I will return in half-an-hour, and then we will consult as to the when and the where you shall confirm in person the glorious news for which I will prepare the womanhood by degrees."

Frank assented, and Mr. Lovel, with a radiant smile, presented himself at the breakfast-table.

"Where have you been, you terrible old truant?" cried the blithe Esther Lovel. "First you keep the dinner waiting with your consultations in the office. Then you go out to dine and don't come home to tea at all. And next you stay out all night for a week, on a journey to London. I did think you were safe for breakfast when we'd got you at home, but now you slip out at the side gate and nobody knows where you've gone to."

"A very pretty indictment, to which I plead guilty. But I think the jury will discharge me with acquiescence when they hear why I absented myself this morning." Here the good old man at once ventured on a "white lie."

"There's news in Hull, and it has travelled here, about the 'North Star.'"

A short cry from Mary Greenfield, echoed by her mother, passed away, and all were eager for further particulars.

"I'm not going to tell you to prepare for the worst, very far from it. On the contrary, and now I must request that there may be no smelting salts or burnt feathers called for, but this I can tell you," and the old man's voice filtered with emotion, despite his affected gaiety, "that He who ruleth the winds and the waves, and in

whose hands are the issues of life and death, hath been pleased, I may say miraculously, to preserve the life of our dear Frank Hartley."

All the considerate precautions of the worthy old man failed, however, to prevent the sudden swooning of Mary Greenfield, and a burst of thanksgiving, mingled with sobs, from her mother, whose attention was fortunately distracted by the fainting condition of her child. But soon joyous contentment was restored, and when Mr. Lovel had reiterated his confident assertion of the safety of Frank Hartley, and added that he would himself answer for his appearance in proper persons at his office next day, he hastened to put on his hat and get away on a pretended business engagement.

Mr. Lovel heard indeed an astonishing tale in brief language from the long absent seaman. How he had worked his passage to England from New Bedford in America, the New World rendezvous of Arctic whalers. How he arrived at that place, and what perils by land and sea he endured, will form the subject of his story as told to his parent, his betrothed, and his two earliest friends, and which we shall entitle:

THE ADVENTURES OF FRANK HARTLEY.

"You have of course heard every particular of the last farewell of the 'North Star,' when with hearts full of hope and swelling with expectation we loosed our canvas and bore away northward from the hardy whalers who had borne us company to the limit of their fishing grounds in Davis's Straits. There, at the well-named Cape Desolation, on the coast of West Greenland, we left them, and working in face of large floes of ice travelling southward, we passed into Baffin's Bay by Disco and Haden, having sighted the deceptive inlet called Sandeman's Hope. Still northwards and the sounds of Westonholme and Sir Thomas Smith were seen. And now baffling currents and packing ice impeded our utmost efforts to gain a westward course, while mountainous icebergs, immovably grounded in a shallow sea, stretched like an eternal barrier to all further progress in the desired direction. Skirting along these mountain chains of frozen snow, we every now and then found large creeks of open water, which we successively explored, only to meet the same discouraging repulse in a narrowing channel at last uniformly ending in a continuous icebound barrier. Thus went by in exhausting labour, in perilous boat and sledge journeys, and a degree of cold in which the head of a hatchet or the barrel of a musket burnt the naked hand-like red hot iron, the short arctic summer. We were now at what seemed to us to be the head of Baffin's Bay, and our battling with the sea of ice drove us almost due east towards the coast of America, if indeed there be a continuation of that mighty continent to the pole itself, in a region where land and ice are undistinguishable. Future enterprise may show the world the Polar Sea, which we failed to penetrate. But I weary you, I am sure, with my sailor's yarns, and will come to matters less hard for you to understand."

"One dreadful night in early September, when all had been made snug, the stout interlaced platform of spars floated around us to defend us from drift ice, firmly fixed by its ponderous chains, all sail taken in, the boats housed, and cheerful groups crowded round the blazing fire, for which the ship was so well contrived and stored. Song and story, jest and good cheer were in the ascendant, when a sound well known to old North sea sailors rose above the howl of the fierce north-east wind. A report as of artillery, followed by continuous reverberations, smote the ear. It was the rifling of a monstrous iceberg, which underworked by the currents and drift of the summer, had rolled its bulk in thousands of tons of fragments, each of which exceeded the size of the largest ship ever built by the hands of men, close to our devoted vessel. Blow after blow did our stout ship resist, her best bower cable parted, her kedge anchor dragged, and then we heard overhead the ponderous slippery masses of ice sliding over each other and cutting away our rigging and

splintering our masts and deck-houses as if the strong oak, red pine, and tough ash were mere matches or firewood. Presently we were bodily lifted as by a ground swell, then as suddenly sinking she struck with a shock as on a rocky bottom, another rise and the water poured in below her counter, and the word went round that her rudder was gone and her sternpost started. Now brave men looked serious and some despaired. Another and another rise and fall, but none so violent or serious as the first, and as our good ship seemed no worse, confidence that we should ride out the disastrous night returned. By heaven's mercy we did so.

"But alas! dim daylight disclosed a sorry sight. Our deck was strewn with the wreck of all that the resistless ice boulders had not swept or torn away with them. Bowsprit, foremast, main and mizen, were all clean gone, and their broken stumps and the twisted iron-work of davits, bulwarks and stanchions, told too plainly the destructive night of the desolating avalanche. We had, it is true, a shelter, but we had no longer a ship! It is hard for you to realise what these words mean to men cut off from home and life within that horrid region where travel is for the most part of the year impossible, where mere exposure to the air is death to all who are not warmly protected, where there is no house, no shelter, no road, no track, no tree nor shrub, no food, no man to help or succour the perishing voyager. To leave the friendly cover of our ship and our stores of fuel and provisions, even had our boats not been all stove, would have been madness; we therefore made the 'North Star,' as wind and water-tight as we could, and resolved, as sailors should do, to set a stout heart against the worst, which must always mend when you have come to the turn-point. Month after month passed. We carefully husbanded our stores, but they visibly and too rapidly diminished. Our supply of vegetable food and of bread gave in, and that dreadful scourge scurvy broke out among us. More than half of our crew, and among them some of our best hands, died miserably of this loathsome sickness, and many others, after committing their comrades to their shallow graves, or cairns, sank into despondency and wasted into shadows of their former selves."

"Nine long months found a band, for the most part of sickly skeletons, all that answered to their names at muster of the crew of the 'North Star.' Our gallant commander, the surgeon of the expedition, Dr. Mackenzie, a son of the Arctic traveller who alighted an open Polar sea in 1789, in the latitude of Joy Cape, and myself were among the most fortunate and healthy of the survivors. Long and sad were the councils as to the most likely mode of escape from a position which could only end in starvation and death, for all were convinced that no human aid could ever reach us in that trackless wilderness of death and terror. Dr. Mackenzie's advice was adopted, or, in all human probability I should not be here to tell the tale. Seventeen souls, all told, having long before prepared the wreck of our whale boat as a sledge, and stowed it with stores, ammunition, and furs, set out on a long and weary pilgrimage south-east in search of the northern head of a nameless bay at the mouth of which Hudson's Strait forms the entrance to the great Bay of the same name washing the shores of the 'Islands of God's Mercy.' I well remember how cheerful that namesounded as the clever man whose experience in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company had led him to those parts, spoke confidently of our coming in that direction upon some party of adventurous fox-hunters, or at any rate upon the head-waters of Repulse Bay, in which case we might reach some station, or fort, as they are called, of the great British Trading Company of the Northern New World. I will pass over the hardships and misfortunes of our little party, which numbered seven souls only when, after two months of travel, we sighted an open sea. It was on the twenty-second of July. Falling on our knees, our brave director and guide, for he it was who brought us through our deadly perils, drew forth a book of prayer, and in tones I shall ever remember, read aloud

the hundred and seventh Psalm. It is at such moments that a man finds consolation in the sense of his own utter helplessness and the power of his merciful deliverer."

Good Mrs. Greenfield, who had been a most attentive listener, had at this point taken down the Book of Common Prayer. Frank Hartley paused.

"And it is the twenty-second day of the month whereon that psalm of thanksgiving is appointed."

"Read it, dear mother," said the young sailor, reverently.

Mrs. Greenfield did so, and never had scripture reader a more devout auditory.

"Thirteen days more had exhausted our energies and provisions, but fortunately a ptarmigan and a few birds of the pigeon tribe fell to my gun. We had now traversed the whole length of Southampton Island, with which Mr. Mackenzie was familiar, and had reached Fort Chesterfield. There the doctor determined to stay for a while among old friends; the captain and myself with two seamen proposing to return to England by a Hudson's Bay ship. But this was not to be. The gallant seaman who had so manfully battled against cold and hunger, fatigue and thirst, sunk under the reaction of safety and deliverance. He sickened with a nervous fever aggravated by sleeplessness and brain excitement. I would not leave him, and Hudson inlet was closed by ice, and the passage to the Atlantic by Davis's Straits barred, before I had completed the sad task of watching the last sigh, and receiving the last grasp of the hand of as true a seaman as ever gave his life to his country's service."

Frank Hartley brushed away a moisture from his eye and went on:

"Wonderful, indeed, are the ways of Providence. This accident of my detention led to what I yet think will prove the great event of my life. Prepare yourself, my dearest Mary, for a disclosure which must bring down a righteous retribution on those whose blood-guiltiness will yet come to light. I was destitute, and engaged myself with a sharing party of trappers and fur dealers who proposed a trip to be ended by the time of the return of the summer ships from the mother-country. There are strange characters from many countries among these hunters and traders, not a few, I fear, fugitives from justice and perpetrators of crime in other and more civilised lands. Our party was very successful, and, as you may well suppose, our nightly camp-fire was often the circle of stories of past life and of personal adventure. A casual mention of my native place, of Hull and of York, excited evident interest in one of our party. His name in our party was that almost universal English patronymic John Smith, but he disclosed to me that his real name was Branscombe Norris."

"Branscombe Norris!" ejaculated Mr. Lovel. "The name is sufficiently uncommon to leave no doubt; it is the same. Esther, my dear," for the old dame seemed as much struck by the name as her husband, "how long is it since Branscombe Norris was transported for the robbery at Ousebridge?"

"Eleven years; but they said that he was seen in Hull in sailor's dress before half his time was up."

"And they said right, my good lady," replied Frank Hartley. "He was indeed in Hull—ay, and in York—where he saw one Abraham Morris,"—all present started at the name—"and in Ousebridge, where he rode through on a fatal night four years ago, after the foulest deed that dying man ever unburthened his guilty soul of."

Mary and her mother hung with agonised intentness on his words.

"Yes, my own, my ever loved Mary. To these ears, and written by this hand, was the dreadful crime related and written down. And here," added he, drawing from his breast a yellow-looking paper, "is the dying confession of Branscombe Norris."

"I must tell you first how his death occurred. We had been out shooting for several hours, when an animal of larger size than our ordinary



[FRANK'S RETURN.]

game presented itself. I had wounded it, but my slugs were too light, and my range too long to effectually disable the moose-deer, for such it was, from escaping. John Smith was noted for the venturesome charges with which he, with fool-hardy rashness, overloaded his piece, and upon this occasion he fatally miscalculated the strength of resistance of his barrels. He fired, and the gun burst in his hands with a violence and effect such as I have never seen. His left hand was entirely shattered, the right eye and cheek torn and lacerated, and portions of the charge and of the lock were embedded in his skull. I watched him and dressed his wounds; but mortification of the mutilated hand set in, and Branscombe Norris knew that his hours were numbered. Calling me to him he said, in a firm, clear voice:

"Frank Hartley, the time has come when nothing that man can do can harm or serve Branscombe Norris." I had heard the name in my youth as that of a notorious malefactor.

"Yes, Branscombe Norris. I was born in York of good and honest parents; how I have stained their name needs not be told. My time is short, so listen to one, the greatest and almost the latest of my many villainies. I had escaped from the convict-ship wherein I was about to be conveyed to New South Wales to a penal settlement; having struck down my warder, jumped overboard, and swam ashore as we lay in Simon's Bay at Capetown. Taking service in a foreign merchantman, I made several country voyages in the Pacific, till, in a quarrel, I severely wounded the made of our ship, a Swede, and at once absconded.

"In my next voyage I was wrecked, and, strange to say, picked up in a boat with some messmates, by a Hull trader, and carried into the great port of my native country. I was much changed in personal appearance by my hardships and sufferings, and I determined to avail myself of the opportunity to demand assistance from my cousin, who, report stated, was a prosperous trader in York. Prosperous or not, I knew that same cousin of mine to be a most

consummate hypocrite and scoundrel, and he knew that I knew it, for we had planned and executed most desperate rascalities together, until I was caught and punished, and became a castaway, while he somehow escaped and got rich.

"To Abraham Morris, then, I repaired. I went to his house after dark, as my tattered condition, and weightier reasons, made it dangerous for me to be seen by day. I found him unchanged, except in dress and the surroundings of money. I made myself known as his old pal Branscombe Norris. After some threatening remarks as to my perilous position, and to his power, which he forbore to use, of at once consigning me to a felon's fate, he told me, that he supposed one crime more wouldn't much overweight my cargo, and if so, he could tell me where a thousand pounds, or thereabouts, would be riding along a solitary road that night with only one man to take care of it. My greedy soul took fire at the thought. A thousand pounds, and within easy reach! I was ready. Where and when was it to be had?

"You know Ousebridge?"
 "Every stone of it."
 "And Stepstile Road?"
 "Of course."
 "And Cross Common, and the road with a high bank on each side leading to Greenfield Farm?"

"Why be so tedious, I know them all."
 "There is a stout cob, good for thirty miles, in a paddock at the back of the barn-side. There is a bride and saddle in the barn at the end of the close. That's more information than the Proverb says is needful for a Yorkshireman to find a horse. Here's a length of wire that may be useful to stretch across the narrow road. And remember, if you fail in this, and show your face again in York, the rope is twisted for a necktie for Branscombe Norris."

"Desperate, hungry and poverty-stricken as I was, I felt I was in the presence of a greater villain than I then was. That night my victim fell before me. I clutched my plunder! when,

seeing the prostrate man make a movement as if to rise, I dealt him a blow with a heavy bludgeon. He rolled over. I saw his face and knew him well, it was the man they called 'Honest John,' and I was his murderer."

There was a solemn pause, and heavy sobs and flowing tears for several minutes followed the close of the confession.

"The murderer fled to Holland, and there in a low sailors' lodging-house, after a debauch, was robbed of all that he had sold his soul to procure. This confession I took down from his lips, and here it is signed with his running hand, 'Branscombe Norris,' in characters that show a misused education."

"Did I not say," interposed Mr. Lovell, "that heaven in its own good time would make this murder manifest? This circumstantial narrative will enable me to lay such an affidavit before Sir William Wentworth and Colonel Lascelles as will at once secure the arch-villain Abraham Morris, though I must not conceal from you, my dear Frank, the certainty I feel that your Uncle Stephen, though not cognisant of the blood-guiltiness of his accomplice, must be held responsible for his share in the promulgation, if not the forgery, of your father's will."

"At the proper time all this will be made clear. A piece of evidence of the most conclusive kind has within the past few weeks come into my hands, which will enable me to bring matters to an issue with more speed than the heart-breaking delays of the ecclesiastical Courts permit. I have brought an action at Common Law for money had and received from the estate of your late father Reginald Hartley, on behalf of yourself, Frank, as his next of kin and heir-at-law. Their defence will be, the production of the will of the deceased, which rests the estate in the defendants as the executor and residuary legatee of Reginald Hartley. It shall go hard but this defence shall ruin the wrong-doers and right the innocent. Time must explain the rest."

(To be Continued.)



[ACCUSED.]

CLARICE VILLIERS;

OR,

WHAT LOVE FEARED.

CHAPTER XXV.

PARTED.

More hearts are breaking in this world of ours
Than one would say. In distant villages
And solitudes remote, where winds have wafted
The barbed seeds of love, or birds of passage
Scattered them in their flight, do they take root
And grow in silence, and in silence perish.

LOVEFELLOW.

As the reader's voice ceased a hush of dead silence filled the room. Lord Redmond felt that the eyes of the three women were bent intently upon his downcast face, perusing anxiously, eagerly, every lineament, that they might glean, if it were possible, from some treacherous token, the certainty of his guilt. He knew it, but he faltered no jot, for a sudden fear had seized his spirit which made him insensible for the time of his surroundings. Mrs. Dornton was the first to speak:

"Lord Redmond, do you still persist in your denial?"

The young man raised his face and looked at her with a dazed, stupefied air as if he had not comprehended the question. It was repeated. By an evident effort, Lord Redmond seemed to collect his faculties.

"I swear to you, Mrs. Dornton," he said, solemnly, "that I know nothing of your daughter's flight."

And he added, in a tone too low for the others to catch the words:

"Would to heaven I did!"

The recluse crossed the room and faced the young man, her stern countenance set hard and inflexible as stone.

"Ah, you persist in your denial," she said, in a slow hissing tone. "You will not restore to the mother whom you have robbed the tender nestling which you have marked as the prey of your evil passions. It is well. I am not of the kind who descend to entreat of such as you to do justice. Justice!" and she laughed a strange, bitter, mocking laugh. "When did one of the race of men ever render it to those whom they can oppress, or hope they can, with impunity? I have no other word for you, base scion of a good old stock. Take now my curse—a mother's curse; but doubt not that I will amply avenge myself and my child."

Mrs. Dornton turned from Lord Redmond contemptuously, and suddenly addressed herself to Miss Villiers:

"I would not that this man should make yet another victim," she continued. "Be warned in time, child. One who can prove so false as he to all the rights of human life would not fail to sow with sharpest thorns the pillow of the woman whom he should make his wife," and without a word of farewell, she swept from the room.

Mrs. Villiers arose hastily and looked at her daughter and Redmond with a dubious expression.

"I must see that terrible woman clear of the Manor," she said, as she left the room, hastily. Both Clarice and Redmond understood that this diversion was merely a feint to give them an opportunity for a tête-à-tête and a reconciliation. Neither seemed in haste to break the silence which ensued.

"Clarice—Miss Villiers," said Redmond, at length. "I deeply regret that some words which I had proposed speaking to you as this madwoman came here, had not been spoken before her advent."

"Miss Villiers!" The phrase augured ill, Clarice thought.

"At least," she responded, coldly, "you owe me some explanation now."

"What has taken place this morning does not add to the necessity which exists for an

explanation by me—unless indeed you believe Mrs. Dornton's charge."

"You have not refuted it—save by a bare assertion."

"Am I then so lost to honour that my word may no longer be received?"

Clarice was silent.

"I swear to you that upon that point I am at least innocent. I have not spirited away Aricia Dornton—nay, more, I would give much to know that she were safe beneath her mother's roof."

"Ah! You acknowledge some interest in this wild girl, then?"

"Clarice, I had sought you this morning, prepared to make an avowal which I felt I could in honour put off no longer and which yet my soul shrinks from."

Some premonition of the truth blanched Clarice Villiers' fair face to a deathly white.

"Go on," she murmured.

"It is not easy to do so. From my own mouth I shall stand convicted. To speak is ineffably bitter. To keep silence is criminal."

Clarice's lip curled with something of contempt.

"You are very tragic this morning. Everard. What is the terrible secret?"

Then, as the young man preserved silence, she went on, with an accent of bitterness:

"I will show you that a woman can be more brave. You wish to tell me that you have transferred your affections from me—to Miss Dornton."

She broke off with a hard little laugh.

"Clarice, I—"

"Is it not so?"

Redmond bowed his head slowly. Then by a sudden movement he seized the girl's hand.

"Clarice, you will believe—"

"Loose my hand, my lord, and address me, if you please, as a stranger; or rather," and her voice took a sharp intonation of pain, "speak to me no more."

"I can say nothing in my own defence," he replied, humbly. "I can only throw myself on

your forgiveness. I have tried to act truly—at last."

"Ah, you have reason to make that qualification. 'At last!' Yes, when you have for long made my heart the plaything of your caprice—to be wrong—tortured as it might seem fit to you. Let us not prolong this colloquy. Go!"

"With your forgiveness?"

"Forgiveness! What is that to you—to me? You make a toy, a plaything of a woman's heart, you pour into her ear day by day, week by week, nay, year by year, the sweet subtle poison of false words, and then when she finds that all has been a fond deception, when her fairy palace of a bright future crumbles to dust and ashes, you speak of forgiveness?"

"I have indeed sinned against you greatly, Clarice," Lord Redmond replied; "but my sin had been yet deeper if at last I had not found the courage to make the avowal which I have made this day. When I beg for your forgiveness it is not that I can forgive myself; that I can never do. I know how weak I am and have been, but I think I shall find strength if I can see the truth to the world. That cannot yet be done; but you I could not longer deceive. What would our hopes of the future—of a happy wedded life—have been but fair yet deceitful dreams, as they are on one side the love had not been such as a wife should ask?"

"Yes, it is better that you should avow the truth even now," replied Clarice, bitterly, "than that you should have pledged your faith to me in the sight of God and man when you knew that the pledge was but a heartless mockery. It is not of your conduct to me to-day that I have cause to complain; it is of the long delusion in which you have lulled me. When was your heart—your heart?"—and she laughed wildly—"given to this girl?"

"Clarice, be merciful!"

"Must I again remind you, my lord, that between us the style of affianced lovers must cease? No, you cannot tell me the time when liking passed into what you call love. You saw that Miss Dornon had a pretty face, you knew her to be ignorant of the world and the world's ways in her enforced seclusion. You viewed her as a plaything, and proposed keeping your engagement to me if only I could be kept in ignorance of your plebeian chère amie."

"Miss Villiers!"

"The phrase offends you, then. I am glad that you are not altogether lost to gentlemanly feeling. And there is one thing more I would say before we part. Restore this poor child to her home—to the parent who, stern and uncouth as she may be, has still maternal rights and a mother's feelings."

"It is not in my power. You too believe me not, yet in this matter, at least, I am guiltless. I know that I have forfeited with you my right to credence, but on the honour of my name I have no part in the disappearance of Miss Dornon."

"You acknowledge that you love her. Who else could have aided in her flight?"

"I cannot tell. It is for that, amongst other reasons, that it is well I am here to-day, for, although I know that Mrs. Dornon would repulse with scorn my offers of assistance in the search, my aid will be indirectly rendered nevertheless. It only remains that I have one word—but one word of pardon before I quit you."

"It is yours, if any word of mine is of value in your estimation."

Clarice extended her hand, but her face was averted and her eyes were filled with tears.

CHAPTER XXVI.

RISE AND FALL.

And after a pause the old man said,
His mind still coming back again
To the one sad thought that haunts his brain,
"Are there any tidings from over the sea?"
LONGFELLOW.

LORD BOSCAWEN was called away from Tremawr Manor by a very sudden summons. The lawyer had telegraphed that the Marquis of

Calderfield had returned with but short warning. He was expected in town every hour, and would be eager to embrace his son.

When the young man made his adieux to his host and hostess, to Miss Villiers, and to the men with whom he had been of late associated, there was one amongst the latter who watched him narrowly, almost suspiciously. This was Captain Bertram Pleydell.

Was it the soldier's fancy, or did Lord Boscawen really show little of the joyful eagerness which might have been expected of him. To the captain, at least, the result did not appear to be very satisfactory.

"I am sorry for the marquis," he said to himself. "The house of Calderfield has not a promising heir."

There was in truth a somber look on Boscawen's face which augured ill for his filial responsiveness. He brightened a little as he took farewell of Clarice. A more generous man would have pitied the poor girl's evident misery. But Boscawen saw in it only the token of his own success in that quarter. He was too wary, however, to say aught at such a juncture which could alarm or trouble her. He could bide his time.

The journey to town was quickly made. Boscawen's first visit was to the lawyer. Here he learned that the marquis had arrived and was impatiently awaiting his coming.

The marquis in Governor Scrope was soon reached, and the young man was at once ushered into the marquis's presence. The latter arose from his chair as Boscawen entered, and advanced towards him eagerly.

The old nobleman was in appearance an excellent specimen of the best type of the English aristocrat. Tall of stature, and stately in bearing; his years seemed to sit lightly upon him. His clear-cut, somewhat haughty, yet kindly features were irradiated by the fierce lustre of an Oriental sun, and his eye was bright as that of a boy.

The contrast between father and son was great, and Boscawen's pale face as little matched the leonine front of the old patrician as did his slight frame the stalwart proportions of his sire.

Scant time was allowed either for comparisons of this kind at that moment, for by a simultaneous movement they met in a warm embrace. Then the marquis held the young man away from him at arm's length, and gazed in his face intently.

"Ah!" he said, in a low voice, "he is not like her!"

Something in the tone and words alike jarred on Lord Boscawen. He was at no loss however to interpret the allusion. His father was thinking of the wife whose face, across the long years, yet dwelt vividly in his memory.

"Be seated, Montague," said the earl. "We have much to say to each other. After many years of loneliness and affliction, how kind Providence is to me at last. I had never entirely relinquished hope that one day we should meet; but as time passed on and all my efforts and all my energetic lawyers' researches were alike in vain, the expectation became even weaker and yet more weak. Had I received the intelligence during the time that I was still in Syria I should have returned immediately, but the telegrams and letters of Sulway and Barnes did not reach the obscure villages in the wild country where I wandered."

"Mr. Barnes said he feared such would be the case, and all that was left for me was to wait in anxious yet happy expectation for your return when you should at last learn the truth. Had it not been that Mr. Barnes pointed out to me the utter futility of the attempt, I would have myself sought you."

"Barnes was quite right—quite right. You would only have visited the better known cities and towns, whereas my strange mood has too often driven me to seek the solitude of the desert or the companionship of those wild races who have little sympathy for the narrow town. Day after day I have shared the hospitality of the Bedouin Arab and night after night have I slept beneath the shelter of his rough black

tent—dreaming—dreaming ever of the same thing."

The old man's face saddened and his voice became broken. Then he said, abruptly:

"You remember your mother, Montague?"

"But faintly, my lord. Some shadowy memories there are, but no distinct or clear remembrance."

"How old were you, Montague, when—when she died? Mr. Barnes was not explicit on that point?"

"About six years old, I believe."

"And she was buried in the little graveyard of the village of Fernham—buried in a nameless grave! And that was the end!"

The old man covered his face with his hands and turned away. There was silence in the room for some minutes. Boscawen drew his breath with a deep inspiration like a man who has escaped some peril or been released from some burden. Presently the marquis raised his head and resumed the conversation.

"One of our first duties will be to make a pilgrimage to Fernham. It may not now be possible for Gwendoline to rest in the family vault of the Pleydells, but her humble tomb must not at least lack one mourner—he whose mourning has been life-long. You have few relics of your mother, I learn from Barnes."

"Very few. After her death, I was left to the care of strangers, and was too young at the time to understand my duties or my rights. Even before she was laid in earth, my poor mother's receptacles of cherished trifles and trinkets, books, letters, were ransacked, and the contents appropriated by strangers."

The marquis shook his head slowly.

"It is hard to understand why she, a woman of intellect almost masculine and will wholly so, did not, when she felt the coming of death, in some way provide for your care. It is not the course I should have expected from her, but I suppose the long illness from which Barnes tells me she has suffered weakened body and mind alike."

Lord Boscawen murmured a few words of assent.

"To die, alone and making absolutely no sign! to die, leaving a child to poverty and strangers' care, when she must have known herself entitled—even if she held her hate of me—to great wealth. Surely never delusion and anger so warped a noble mind before. You know your mother's story, Montague?" the marquis asked, abruptly; "our story, I may rather say?"

"I have heard but little. Barnes simply told me that my mother left her home within a year of her marriage."

"But he did not tell you the motives which actuated her in such a course?"

"No; he said the subject was sacred for him, and that his was not the tongue to tell the tale."

"He was right. It is I, and I alone, who must perform that painful task."

Lord Boscawen held out his hand with a deprecatory movement.

"Why should it ever be told, even to me, if the telling will re-open old wounds and renew old pains?"

"It is necessary, Montague—necessary alike in justice to my dead wife and to myself. Had you heard the story from her lips, filled as it would have been of bitterness against me, perhaps I would not have now spoken. Knowing only what your mother knew, it was not possible that she could think of me without bitter memories—nay, perhaps with absolute loathing. Still, if you had heard the tale from her dear lips, I would not have striven to set in a clearer light any distorted picture of me she might have drawn; but as this is not so, I think it well that you should learn from me the true history of facts which you are certain to hear in a garbled manner and a distorted form in the world amongst which you will have to mix."

"If the recital be not too painful, my lord, it may perhaps be well I should know the history of matters which affect me so nearly."

"Yes. Stay, there are some papers and other things which I wish to have here for reference

as I proceed. I will go and get them," and the

Left to himself. Boscawen rose and stretched himself, yawning terribly meanwhile, with the air of a man who is overcome by the ennuis consequent on unpleasant associations or distasteful occupation.

"It's a deuced nuisance," he muttered. "But then everything is going on capitally. I must listen patiently to this romance of the nineteenth century."

He sauntered round the luxurious room, looking at the paintings by the most admired of the old masters which adorned the walls.

"A sumptuously appointed place, truly," he muttered. "Perhaps a little in the old-world style, but that's appropriate to an ancient patrician race. I do not know that I shall alter it much. The house only requires a mistress to brighten it up. Claries will do the honours in queenly style."

CHAPTER XXVII.

A HEART HISTORY.

I thought it but a friendly note to tell you what strange reports are current here in town. For mine own self, I do not credit them, but there are many who, not knowing you, will lend a ready ear.

LOVEKILLOW.

LORD BOSCAWEN was not left very long to his meditations. The marquis presently returned, bringing with him a small packet of manuscript and a gold locket.

"Montague," he said, "I foresaw that the story with which I deem it well that you should become acquainted at the very commencement of our so happily united life would be too painful to me for verbal relation. I shrank from its recital on many grounds. I have, therefore, spent the last hour while I was awaiting your arrival in committing the facts which it concerns you to know unto paper, and here is the result. I will leave you while you peruse these sheets. I have many reasons for this course, the principal of which is that I, while desiring above all things your filial affection, will not condescend to gain your love on any false grounds. What you will find set down here is the simplest verity. But when you mix, as mix you must in our world, with certain sets, it may be that versions more or less distorted of the story will reach your ear. I do not say that anyone laying claim to the name of a gentleman will be so wanting in delicacy as to broach the subject in the hearing of the son of the actors in the tragedy, for tragedy in truth it was. But in all circles, idiots, tattlers and busy-bodies are to be found. You understand me?"

"Undoubtedly."

"So, too, in asking your favourable construction of the facts related here, I do not seek to raise in your mind one untender or disparaging thought of the mother who has passed from earth. Heaven be my witness, I love her with an absorbing passion. She was my very light of life, and no thought of disloyalty to her ever found entrance to my breast; neither in our brief dream of happy wedded life, nor in the long lonely years which I have lived since that dream vanished for ever. No, my son, whatever you may think of me, I conjure you let no slightest breath of doubt, no faintest failing of loving memory, obscure in your mind the image of the parent whom you have lost. You say that you have no remembrance of the features of the marchioness. Here is her portrait."

He opened the locket as he spoke and placed it in Boscawen's hands. The latter looked at the miniature contained in the golden shrine long and intently. It was an exquisitely painted likeness of a surprisingly lovely woman. A face of the purest oval, with features classic in their delicate regularity, with their statuesque perfection warmed into human loveableness by the rich brunette complexion, the soft, deep tinting of lip and cheek, and the large, expressive eyes of blue-grey. Altogether the young man thought that he had never met a face so ideal in its refined beauty.

And it had another attraction for him still—

an attraction peculiar and indefinable, which he strained his faculties to grasp during those moments of his silent contemplation of the portrait, but whose cause eluded his apprehension. As some men, on coming upon a scene new to them—an Alpine height, a Highland moor—have felt a mysterious sense of familiarity with the spot, and have dreamed that surely they had visited it in some former life which lay in the past before their birth on earth, so it seemed to Boscawen that surely somewhere—he could not say where; at some time—whose period he could not guess—he had met this dead woman—but not as a child meets its parent.

"There is another portrait of the marchioness," said Lord Calderfield, breaking in on the young man's rapt reverie, "at Elwood, our place in Cumberland. You will see it by-and-bye. It is a full-length portrait by a master hand, and is held in high esteem. But to me it seems less life-like and true than the little presentment. This at least recalls to me most strangely the dear face of my loved one. And this should be yours, my son, were it not that it has ever reposed near my heart, and even to you I may not relinquish it. When the coffin-lid is about to be closed over my dead face, then, and not till then, take it off my neck and let it rest upon your own bosom."

The old man drew the locket gently from Lord Boscawen's hands as he spoke, and the action aroused the young man from his abstraction at once.

"Now I will leave you, Montague," said the marquis. "When you have finished the perusal of these papers you will find me in the library."

As the door closed on the marquis's form Boscawen muttered, uneasily:

"What was there in that portrait to affect me in so strange a manner? The face haunts me, and will continue so to do. I could have sworn that the countenance took life under my eyes—that the smooth brows bent into an angry frown, that the large eyes lost their tenderness and pierced my soul, that the proud lips opened to pour upon me denouncing words. Heavens above! it was not until the trinket left my hands that my breath came freely and my heart resumed its even beat. Am I growing a nervous weakling? It would ill become one part at least which I have determined to play. Perhaps I have been an idiot to complicate matters by my last move. Had I anticipated the return of the marquis at this juncture I would not have done so."

Then he took up the manuscript, and spreading it out, began to read slowly and carefully.

"Mr son," it began, "it does not need that I should relate the course of my wooing of Gwendoline Beaufort. Enough that she was a beautiful orphan of good blood, in every way my equal, save in the accidents of title and wealth. I too was an orphan, and at the time of the commencement of our acquaintance a minor. Upon the attainment of my majority we were married, and it was a true love-match on either side. Gwendoline Beaufort had not been without other admirers and suitors. As the belle of the season when she was brought out, and the acknowledged beauty of every circle which she moved in, it could not well be otherwise. It was my happiness to be preferred to all, and of my rivals for her affections I took little notice or heed. It would have been well for me had I done so, for then it might have been easy to defeat the machinations which led to the separation of your mother and myself, and the subsequent unhappiness of both."

(To be Continued.)

Two little children went to church alone. They became tired during the long sermon, and the older one, supposing that school rules held good in churches, led his sister up in front of the preacher and said: "Please, sir, may we go home?" He said, "Yes," and they soberly walked out.

SOME ABORIGINAL CUSTOMS.

Nowhere, perhaps, do the young people begin to think of marriage at an earlier age than in Abyssinia. Parkys states that he has seen brides of eight or nine years old, and boys at proportionately youthful stages considered marriageable. Proposals are made to the girl's father, and during the period of betrothal, the young man is never allowed to see his intended wife even for a moment. Another curious custom prevails and one that would be acceptable in this country. If a young man, for instance, wishes to be adopted as the son of one of superior wealth or station, he takes the latter's hand, and, sucking one of his fingers, declares himself his child by adoption, whereupon the new parent, although he should hold a financial position analogous to Rothschild's, would be bound to assist him to the best of his ability.

THE MYSTERY OF HIS LOVE;

OR,

WHO MARRIED THEM?

By the Author of "Christine's Revenge; or, O'Hara's Wife."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

ALFRED ANNEELY thus began his story:

"I must tell you that my own mother, the daughter of a marquis, a beauty, and one of the richest heiresses in England, was not the first love of my father, John, tenth Earl of Penrythan. No, he had given his heart to Ernestine, the youngest daughter of the Earl of Glendown, but she was poor, and there was a heavy mortgage on Penrythan, and the old earl, my grandfather, was an austere man; the earl, my father, was weak and yielding. Ernestine forfeited, for his sake, all the self-respect which is the great treasure of a proud woman. She became the mother of a baseborn son, the present so-called Earl of Penrythan."

"Ever since my escape from my prison-house, and return to England, more than two years ago, I have been engaged in hunting up evidence of this baseborn's birth and antecedents, and I have collected much which may prove useful when the trial comes on, as come on it must, although we all know the sad, stern old adage, the grim truth, that possession, just or unjust, is nine points of the law. Well, I can prove that Lady Ernestine Harville gave birth to a son in a farm-house in Surrey, called the Green Acres. I know the nurse and the doctor who attended her, both are still alive, though both are old people, for my illegitimate half brother is within a few months of my own age, a year or two on the shady side of forty years. Well, Lady Ernestine was passionately fond of this son. Child though he was of sin and shame, he had only the noblest, the most aristocratic blood in his veins. He was put out to nurse as years went on; he went to school under the name of Arthur Harrow."

"Meanwhile my father had married my unhappy mother, Lady Isabel Lyons, a beauty and heiress. She was devotedly attached to him, but she never had his heart. I was the only offspring of that marriage; there is only six months' difference in the ages of my half brother and myself, and there is a strong family likeness between us. I was seven or eight years old when my dear mother died. During all those years the Lady Ernestine Harville had remained single, had mixed in the gay world—apparently the gayest of the gay, but she had refused all offers—she loved only my father. I do not find that my father wronged my mother

through absolute unfaithfulness during those years of their marriage; I think he was even grieved when she sank in rapid consumption, and he did not marry Lady Ernestine for nearly two years.

"She was ever a cold, hard stepmother to me; she set my father against me, made him harsh, stingy and unjust, and so the years went on until I joined my regiment after leaving Woolwich at the age of eighteen, and I went at once out to China; there I remained till I was over twenty, when I came back to England. My father and step-mother met me in London, both very kind and agreeable, and they proposed that I should spend my nine months' leave with them in France, Italy and Switzerland, which I did. I see now what was Lady Penrythan's object in keeping me away from all those who had known me as a lad: it was that when her devilish scheme was ripe for execution, nobody should be able to say that the impostor, who was to take my name, was not myself, and thus I joined my regiment, then quartered for a few months in Carlisle, and whilst there I met my darling Edith, who afterwards became my adored but most cruelly deceived wife. You all know the tale of our secret marriage among the Cumberland hills, of our short honeymoon, of my regiment being ordered to Canada, and of the blank, dreadful silence which soon followed my departure. And here comes the mysterious power and iniquity of this most diabolical plot. It is quite marvellous how well it has worked, because though the countess had contrived so to keep me away from my London friends, that all the people who had known me at eighteen were willing to accept the impostor at the age of twenty-four for myself, still I was well known among my brother officers, and how it came to pass that some of them did not seek the impostor out and discover that he was not the true Alfred Lord Anerly, strikes one as extremely unnatural.

"I can only suppose that the impostor kept well out of their way for a few years after his usurpation of my title and position, and I believe he wrote insolent letters to more than one of them, Captain Frossarte among the rest, treating them with a snobbish pride, as they thought, but in reality the reason being that he did not desire to meet any of them face to face, and thus he actually spent the first few years after his marriage with poor Grace Biddulph in travelling upon the Continent. But now I will tell you what befell my miserable self after I left my dear wife Edith.

"I went to London, joined my regiment, and sailed from Liverpool in low spirits, for it was horrible to be obliged to leave my beloved bride, and through fear of my cunning step-mother, who had two little daughters of her own whom she wished to enrich at my expense, to be compelled to conceal the very fact of our marriage. Arrived in Canada I wrote to her regularly for a time, and sent her every farthing I could spare. Little, meanwhile, did I dream of the net spread for me—my half brother, of whose existence I was not then aware, had actually followed me to Canada.

"His mother had always contrived to see him several times during the year. She had supplied him liberally with money. The earl, my father, and his also, was especially ashamed of that error of his youth which had stained the memory of his wife with a dark spot. He never wished to see his eldest son, and I verily believe he never did see him, for when he was introduced to him as myself the earl was almost blind, broken in health, and weak in intellect. Well, I will not dwell too long on the most painful part of this story. I wish that I could forget it, but that is impossible. I know that the countess had heaps of money at command. Money will do anything. It bought over my valet, Lewis, to be her bond slave; it bought over two surgeons—both since dead—to sign a false certificate of lunacy in the name of a man who had been dead two years, a New Englander, named Rupert White, a young fellow who had been out of his mind two years before he drowned himself. Well, this is what befell me. I was stationed with my regiment at Montreal

when I received an invitation to go and spend Christmas at the house of a hospitable gentleman named Saunderson, who lived in fine style, though twelve miles distant from a railway station and thirty from Montreal. I accepted the invite, obtained leave, and set forth with my valet, Lewis. I was to be absent a fortnight. I did not see the barracks at Montreal again for seventeen years."

Edith sank sobbing at her husband's feet.

"Hurry on with this fearful tale," she said; "do not dwell on it; it is more than we can either of us bear."

"I arrived at the station," continued Lord Anerly, "a carriage was in waiting; the ground was quite covered with snow. How well I remember that drive in the dark, gusty afternoon—a drive of a dozen miles, and thus I arrived at the gloomy house, situate in its own densely-wooded grounds which I had believed to be the house called the Cedars, inhabited by Colonel Saunderson; but it was an asylum for the insane called the Woodlands. The moment the doors closed behind me I understood from the austerity and gloom of the place that I had entered a prison-house, and was the victim of a plot; but I did not understand for some time that my man Lewis had trapped me into a lunatic asylum.

"When they called me Mr. White, and laughed to scorn the idea that I was Lord Anerly, when my man Lewis stated that his name was Walker, that he was my cousin, and that though the son of a Boston lawyer, it was my craze to imagine myself the heir to an English earldom, my rage knew no bounds. I asked to be allowed to write to my wife, and writing materials were given to me, but my attendants have since told me that all the letters I wrote were destroyed. And now begun those years of a living death, which I beg you all to allow me to pass over as soon as I can. I was so violent that they put handcuffs on me and locked me in my room.

"Heaven forbid that all the doctors of the Woodlands were in the plot, but two or three of them, made rich for life by the countess, deceived the others. The years went on. One of my attendants must have been in the pay of the countess, and the impostor told me that my wife had joined with my enemies and had married a rich man. Meanwhile, the impostor actually paid the visit to Colonel Saunderson at the Cedars in my name. I was not well known there personally. Colonel Saunderson invited me simply because he had met with hospitality and kindness from the earl, my father, twenty years before. The impostor was quite well enough to pass for an officer and a noble; he was as handsome as Antinous; so men said of me indeed in my youth; he pretended to be very ill at an hotel in a small town lying between the Cedars and Montreal.

"My man, Lewis, was with him. He received all the letters that were intended for me, doubtless yours, my Edith, amongst the rest, thus he was put in possession of all the secrets of my life. He still feigned illness, and Lewis wrote to my friend Frossarte, so Edith tells me she remembers hearing Frossarte say, to inform him I was too ill to see anybody. The rascal obtained a doctor's certificate, and actually started for New York without returning to Montreal, but he sent Lewis for all my property, clothes, books, jewels, then sold out of the army by proxy, and he arrived in New York, where he went, to seek a woman whom he passionately loved, a notorious beauty, but a scandal to her sex.

"This woman you have all known as Lady Overbury, but she was known by the name of Laurette. She had been a thief and a profligate, but she was nevertheless the married wife of the impostor. She was gone, he found, when he reached New York, and he discovered, to his dismay, that she had abandoned the child of their marriage—a boy—whom he tenderly loved. He came to England, believing her dead, for she had inserted an account of her death in a New York paper. The impostor was at once believed in at Penrythan. The earl was blind, half deaf, and never gave the matter a doubt. Grace Biddulph, who had loved me in

her school-girl fashion when she was fourteen, actually took this very handsome bearded fellow for me; gave him her woman's heart, and married him, nothing doubting, and so the wicked went on prosperously.

"Edith tells me that she sought out Samuel Diplock, who married us, and that he denied that he had ever done so. Now, let me tell you that I sought this same Samuel Diplock on my return to England. I found him rich and flourishing—a dean in a great cathedral town. In this high position the influence of the countess had placed him. I heard this before I sought him out; thus I understood that he had joined in this infamous plot, and I would not have asked him to help me as a friend to prove my identity for the world. Nevertheless I called on him, giving the name of Captain Danton, and pretended I was making antiquarian researches in the cathedral, but I spoke of the Penrythan family, and I watched his eyes and his lips. He is a stout and prosperous man; his watch chain is pure and heavy; a great diamond glistens on his plump, white finger; his rooms are magnificent; his income is princely; his daughter is to marry a baronet; but his eyes sank, and his lips twitched when I told him I had heard how intimate he had been with the present earl in his college days, and then I said he married, did he not, a little governess?

"No, I think not," the smooth rascal answered.

"But there was a little governess in the case," I said, "for I knew Penrythan well when he was Lord Anerly, and he has told me of her."

"Then the rev. dean raised his frightened eyes, and answered: 'Oh! she is dead!'

"Ah! she married, I think; but she is dead," he added; and he told me, the glib-tongued rascal, where I should find your grave. I went there one moonlight night, as I have told you, and found the name, and I wept over it the bitterest tears that ever man shed."

"And now," cried Mdlle. Pattini, "let us have some strong coffee with some cognac, and let these gentlemen have a cigar apiece. Oh, yes, my dear, I mean every word I say," whisking herself out of her seat and thrusting her knitting into a bag. "I do, as a rule, very much disapprove of men and their manners. I detest tobacco, in theory, for smoking is a very lazy and selfish and expensive habit. At the same time I think that considering all the circumstances, and the depression under which the earl is suffering, that a cigar will do him good;" and she rang for coffee.

The earl, it was the true Alfred Anerly, had heard himself so described; did the name sound almost like a mockery? He was the earl before men and angels, even as Edith had been his wife and Lady Anerly nineteen years ago; but the proof, the proof, the proof! Alas! how and where was it? How was the proud usurper to be displaced? He held the proofs of the base-born's birth and baptism; he knew where he had been educated.

All that mass of evidence he had been busy in collecting for the last two years, quite unconscious that his wife, Edith, whom he believed to be dead, had been secretly going over the same ground and hunting up the same facts, assisted by her lawyers and Captain Frossarte, ever since that memorable day when, at the grand concert, she had first seen the Earl of Penrythan face to face, and had recognised him as an impostor.

Yes, there was a fine game for the lawyers about to be played; but when it was over, when the law courts had had their fling, would anybody profit by the exposure and the wear and tear, save and except only those same legal gentlemen whose prosperity grows out of the miseries of the rest of mankind? These were the questions which Edith was asking herself as she sat that evening encircled by her husband's arm. She had found him again. What more did she want? And her loving heart answered—nothing.

All Parts was in a ferment. In every café

people were talking of it. Great ladies, wrapped in their velvets and their furs, lounging amid the soft cushions in their luxurious carriages, caused them to stop while they sent their servants to inquire what was the cause of all the bustle and noise and excitement, for though snow covered the streets, people swarmed upon the pavements.

And what was this news? The Earl of Penrythan, a great English nobleman, wounded almost to the death by a great English lady, who had been arrested on the charge of attempted murder, he and another man having given her into custody. The strangest part of the story was the voluntary statements which the earl, who believed himself to be dying, was anxious to publish to the whole world.

He stated that he was not the true Earl of Penrythan; that the true earl was his half-brother, confined nineteen years ago in a mad-house in Canada under a false name. He stated that from news he had heard he believed the true earl to have escaped; to be at large then in Paris; and he invited him wherever he was to come to him where he lay dying in the grand hotel of the Louvre, that he might make legal restitution to the earl and public confession of the crime of which he had been guilty in his youth.

The strange story reached Edith and her husband just as they were stepping into their carriage for the purpose of taking a drive, tête-à-tête. They drove at once in speechless amazement to the Hotel Louvre, and sent up their cards, Alfred, Lord Anerly, Lady Alfred Anerly.

Poor Edith had had those cards printed nineteen years ago, and had always preserved them. They were ushered with respect up the wide staircase, and then into the splendid room where lay the stricken and now truly repentant son of the Dowager Countess of Penrythan who, with his wife, Grace, were weeping by his bedside.

Arthur Harville, for he insisted now on assuming the maiden name of his mother, the only one to which he considered that he had any right, had called round him his medical men and his lawyers, so that there should be neither doubts of his sanity nor of the rectitude of his purpose.

He was white as a corpse; but his eye was bright, his lips firm, his voice calm, though low. He extended his left hand to his half-brother, his right was in a sling.

"Alfred Anerly," he said, "Earl of Penrythan, you are the true earl. I am a vile impostor. The stab which I received was intended for you, but not, I call Heaven to witness, with my knowledge or consent. For some years past I have suffered in conscience on your account. My mother yonder knows that I speak the truth."

The dowager hid her face in her hands, rocked herself backwards and forwards, rose, and was rushing from the room when her son called her sternly back.

"Madame," he said, "I am on the verge of eternity; acting under your influence I usurped the place of my brother, and consigned him to a madhouse on a false charge. Let the law take its course. I am willing to die in a prison rather than in this luxurious room."

"Stop," said the true earl, in loud, clear tones; "we seek justice, not revenge. Only let this matter be cleared up. Tell me first of all how do you know that I am indeed your half-brother and not an impostor?"

"I have known of your presence in Paris for the last two months. You have been watched, Lewis, your valet, who sold you years ago, met you and returned to me with the news. We knew before that that you had escaped from the mad-house through one of your keepers. We gave him a hundred pounds to deceive you with an account of your wife's death. We knew that Madame Donnetta was your wife, and it was the infamous woman to whom I have always believed myself married, Laurette, Lady Overbury, who kept watch on all your movements. That woman dreaded your re-establishment as Earl of Penrythan."

"She knew that when a public trial came on her name must be brought in, for my marriage

with her must have come out when they raked up my antecedents. I never knew until last night what it was this woman so much dreaded; it was the bringing to light of the fact that she is not my wife, nor Sir Stephen Overbury's, but the lawful wife of a man who was sent to penal servitude in the United States for a term of twenty-two years. He had been a convict for twelve months, when I, a foolish lad, met her, then a popular, profligate public singer in New York Music Halls. I loved her madly, and married her. We had one son, whom she abandoned. She was extravagant, and spent everything I had.

"I went to Canada, to help to carry out the infamous scheme which succeeded so well. On my return to New York she and the child were gone. She put her death in a paper, and I believed her. Afterwards she came to me just as I was about to marry Grace, my present beloved wife. She would not be Lady Anerly; she knew it was known in New York to one or two that she, the wife of William Sells the convict, had committed bigamy, but it was supposed she had married a penniless adventurer. She felt then that it was too soon to place herself in a dazzling public position. She exacted from me instead a huge income. She pretended to me that she was ashamed of her former profligate life being known, but in truth she feared that I should find out that she had no real claim on me. So I married Grace, believing that I had sold myself to a lie, but in reality she, who has now the true, deep love of my whole heart, is indeed my wife, for when Laurette was given in charge by me last night, and was taken before the judge, there was a man in the crowd, William Sells, the ex-convict, who claimed her as his wife. He had in his possession his marriage certificate. He is now prepared with competent witnesses to prove his marriage, and he has been out of prison more than a year, and has been on the track of this woman. He was in the crowd outside the prison door when she arrived there with the police. He denounced her at once, and was allowed to go before the judge, where his depositions were taken down.

"Yesterday evening I was dressing for dinner when a note was brought to me by Lewis. I opened it, and found it was from Lady Overbury. In it she begged me to meet her in the Avenue Violet, beyond the barrier De L'Etoile, at ten o'clock. It struck me as strange. I had not quitted my room until that day, and then only to be driven round the domain of Beauvois. Nevertheless, thinking this woman had some important communication to make, I told my wife that important business called me to Vernon. I went on to Paris, well wrapped in furs, in my own carriage, and taking Lewis with me.

"I was in the lonely avenue punctually at ten. I walked along, and was looking for Laurette, when I saw her standing under a lamp-post. She turned round and stabbed me, as she thought, to the heart; but though desperately wounded, I grappled with her, shouting to Lewis and the coachman and footman. She had not reckoned on this, for in truth the note which I received was intended for you, as she confessed, for she had promised herself and my mother there that you should not live to bring exposure on us all in an open court. She put the notes into wrong envelopes."

"One, indeed, I received," said the true earl; "it was sent on to me from my own hotel, and I received it this morning instead of last night. It ran thus:

"MY DEAR LORD,—The man whom we all dread will trouble us no more after to-night. I am going to Paris to meet him—LAURETTE."

And thus this infamous wretch was caught in her own toils. Our story hastens to an end. Within a few months from that date the true earl was legally established as Earl of Penrythan. The false earl did not die, but he was a cripple for life through the wounds he had received. He lived to repent of his sins, and to

atone by a life of charity and piety for the wrong he had done his half brother.

He advertised for his son Jack, and by that means found the lad, who was still beloved, for he was, though illegitimate, and the son of Laurette, still his own and only son. Jack was placed in an excellent position under government by the earl, who, with Edith his countess, returned good for evil to all their enemies.

The false earl was so rich through Grace, his wife, as not to need money from his brother. Alfred Anerly, with Grace and their children, live in Switzerland.

Vaughan and Lillias are happily married, for neither of her parents desired to see her married to a man of rank and title whom she could not love. The estate called Newland Grange in Surrey is settled on Lillias, and there she lives with Vaughan during part of the year. All the Martin family are provided for. Patini still lives with Edith. The Lomondes and Laurette will end their days in a convict's prison.

A few more lines are needed to explain that it was the woman Ponsard, who being angry with Laurette, sent word to Edith where she would find her child at the "Petit Chien" Inn. Also it must be said that the dark, handsome lodger whom Lillias once saw at her old lodgings was the true earl in disguise. He had money placed out that the false earl knew nothing of, and on that he had lived. Captain Frossart's joy knew no bounds when he met again with his long-lost friend.

[THE END.]

THE LOVER.

WHEN a man is in love with one woman in a family, it is astonishing how fond he becomes of every person connected with it. He ingratiates himself with the maids; he is bland with the butler; he interests himself about the footman; he runs on errands for the daughters; he gives advice and lends money to the young son at college; he smiles at old stories which would make him break out in yawns were they uttered by anyone but papa; he drinks sweet port wine for which he would condemn the steward and the whole committee of a club; he bears even with the cantankerous old maiden aunt; he beats time when darling little Fanny performs her piece on the piano; and smiles when wicked, lively Bobby upsets the coffee over his shirt. The learned author stops short here at the first. Act the second, when three years are supposed to have elapsed since the amiable man has been married, and he and his wife are on a visit to father-in-law, would be a proof of filling in the shade with some very dark colours.

CLARA LORRAINE;

—OR—

THE LUCKY TOKEN.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE discovery of the loss of the horseshoe aroused Clara in a degree from her excited state of feeling. Other sensations now took the place of grief and anger. What hand had removed that painted trifle, and for what purpose had it been taken?

She thought of Lina. A few weeks or months previously she would have been positive that the child, attracted by the pretty toy, had taken it away for her own purposes; but she could not now believe that the effect of her faithful teaching would be thrown aside for so slight a temptation.

Clara also thought of the curious Cécile and of Mabel, but upon neither of these persons could

she fix the theft. Poor Lina was the only one who had free access to her possessions, and, at length, she sadly concluded that she alone could be the culprit.

To assure herself of this fact the young girl resolved to go to the child's room and search for the missing article, for some impulse, some intuition, told her that in this trifling loss there lurked grave consequences.

She therefore lighted her bedroom candle and started for Lina's chamber. The little girl's room was on the lower floor, and adjoined that of Cécile, and as Lina's was the inner chamber, it was only by way of the maid's apartment that the other could be reached.

She gained her pupil's side, and was about awakening her, for still, in some mysterious way, the loss of her little gift made her exceedingly uneasy, but ere she could do so she heard voices in the next room, and her own name being mentioned, she desisted in her efforts to awaken the child and listened.

The voices were lowered to whispers, yet such perfect silence prevailed that Clara had no difficulty in hearing every word. She could not withdraw. She therefore curled herself up on Lina's bed, and while the child slept peacefully on, she, perforce, listened to the conversation in the next room. It was Mrs. Lorraine who first spoke.

"Our little ruse has succeeded admirably," she said. "Everything is now going as well as I could desire."

"Madame is so careful, so adroit and so wise that she must succeed in all her plans," replied the complaisant maid.

"Thank you, Cécile. Though I may not clearly foresee everything which may occur, I think I am right in putting my mind quite at rest as to consequences."

"And madame has been so very much tried of late," interpolated the servile Cécile.

"Ah, indeed, yes, Cécile. You alone of all the family best know what my trials have been. Believe me, your sympathy shall not go unrewarded."

"I am a poor serving woman, madame, yet my heart is at madame's service."

"I know it, Cécile, else I would not trust you so implicitly. But tell me, has Mabel lately held any communication with Mr. Langton except in my presence?"

A rustling of paper followed this question, and "Here is a note, madame, which Miss Mabel bade me carry to the monsieur."

"Let me see it," said Cécile.

Evidently Cécile held back her hand, for Mrs. Lorraine repeated her demand.

"I cannot disobey, madame, by refusing, and yet Miss Mabel say I must give the billet to no one but Monsieur Langton."

"Nonsense, Cécile! What are such promises worth? You know you are my servant, and Mabel has no right to engage you for any purpose without my consent. Therefore give me the note, instantly."

The maid obeyed, and Clara, from her retreat, could see her aunt when she went toward the light to read it. She could also see the frown of displeasure which settled upon her brow as she read, as well as the firmly compressed lips which marked the degree of her anger.

"The shameless girl!" she muttered. "She throws herself in the fellow's way! She will disgrace us all by marrying him unless I prevent it, Cécile!"

"Madame."

"We must be expeditious in what we have undertaken, else we may lose our game. Get me pen and ink. I must make a few alterations in this note before you give it to Mr. Langton. Luckily my penmanship and Mabel's are so much like Clara's that the change will not be observed."

The maid obeyed her mistress's commands, and the latter with great care made certain erasures and additions to the missive.

"There!" she said, when she had finished. "Give that to the gentleman, but as you value your place in my service do not slip a word of its having passed through my hands. Langton's conceit will not keep the note secret. He

was snubbed to-night so publicly that he will be glad to show this letter as confirmation of his hopes."

"But, madame," said Cécile, "will he dare risk losing the favour of Miss Mabel?"

"Bah!" retorted Mrs. Lorraine, "of what value is Miss Mabel's favour to him! He knows he has it already secured, and a flirtation with a prettier and cleverer girl than she will not refuse. It is my wish that he shall show the note. I don't care to how many, the more publicly, indeed, the better, for thereby I shall gain more than one advantage. Be sure you take good care of it, Cécile. If it is lost, or if you fail to deliver it, the consequences will be hard for yourself."

"Madame may trust the faithful Cécile."

Mrs. Lorraine touched a diamond ring upon her finger.

"Do you see this?" she said.

"Yes, madame; it is a most precious gem."

"Would you like me to give it to you?"

"It would be too great a gift. Madame would be too generous."

"Nevertheless you shall have it. If a month from to-day we are relieved of Clara Lorraine's presence this ring shall be yours."

"Thanks, madame, thanks!" returned the delighted Cécile. "Miss Clara shall be gone. She shall be gone in one month, I do assure you."

Mrs. Lorraine left the room. Clara would have sprung to her feet to follow her and to tell her that she might keep her bribe, for that very night, or early the next day, she would quit the house for ever, but her limbs seemed paralysed, and strive as she would she was not able to move.

She lay as if in a trance, for this new conspiracy filled her with a shivering fear. The danger which threatened her was so vague she felt that she could not cope with it. She was so friendless, so helpless, she felt like a waif tossed about by angry, buffeting winds. In the next room she saw Cécile walk to the light, deliberately open the note and read its contents. She saw her stand for a moment thereafter and shrug her shoulders, while the ugly smile which overspread her face, being reflected in the glass before which she stood, was also seen by the affrighted Clara.

The maid slipped the note under her toilet cushion for safe-keeping until the morning, after which she began her preparations for retiring.

Clara lay like one stupefied and stunned until the maid's loud-breathing told her that she had fallen into a deep sleep. Then her senses seemed to return to her.

She arose softly from her place by Lina's side, and as she did so she bent gently over and kissed the sleeping child; then stealing noiselessly to the door of Cécile's chamber she listened breathlessly to see if the maid still slept soundly.

Assuring herself of the fact she crept to the bureau, slipped the note from its hiding-place, and, with it in her hand, stole silently to the outer door, opened it with great caution, passed through and closed it behind her.

She felt like a culprit, as she thus crept forth with the abstracted note in her hand. She detested herself for the miserable part which she had that night played, but self-preservation prompted her conduct. She knew that she was surrounded by secret enemies and open foes. She was alone, helpless, unprotected, and what was admissible in honourable warfare she felt was allowable in circumstances so distressing as her own.

With fleet footsteps she retraced her way to her room. She tore open the note, read its contents with horror, and an instant later fell heavily to the floor.

To fully understand the nature of the plots which were being formed against the unprotected Clara by her unprincipled relatives, it is necessary to return to that moment when, Mrs. Lorraine and her daughter being engaged with

their guests, the entrance of a servant gave a new turn to the evening's incidents.

Clara, it will be remembered, had quitted the room a few moments before, driven thence by her aunt's unkind insinuations and deceitful counsels. Therefore when John entered the parlour bearing something upon a silver salver, the eyes of all present were directed to him. He advanced to Mr. Langton, and making him a low bow, presented the salver. Upon it lay a painted horseshoe and a card.

"With Miss Clara Lorraine's compliments," said John.

Langton at first looked at the object with surprise, but a moment later he took it joyously in his hand and began sincerely to admire it.

"Aw, aw," he said. "This is really a most jolly way of making up a quarrel." He spoke loud enough for all present to hear. "Miss Clara has done an immensely clever thing now, hasn't she? A moment ago she and I were indulging in a little tiff, such as all—aw—aw—appreciative souls engage in occasionally, you know. But it seems her conscience has smitten her, for here she sends me this mighty clever little peace-offering, you know."

He adjusted his eye-glasses and looked at the gift with complacent satisfaction. Mrs. Lorraine looked around upon the faces of the company, and congratulated herself upon her shrewdness, for on every countenance she noted the very expression which she desired to produce.

Langton, flattered and pleased, was inspecting his gift with secret triumph. Mabel, jealous and amazed, was looking at her favoured suitor with mingled fury and disdain. Earnshaw, perplexed and startled, kept his eyes riveted upon the toy which Langton held; upon Mr. Wardlaw's face was a look of gravity which Mrs. Lorraine interpreted as a token of disappointment and displeasure towards the girl who had been proposed to him as a wife, while the other young men crowded around the lucky Langton, laughing and congratulating him on his good fortune.

"That hits you to a T, Langton," said one whose fondness for the turf was evidenced by his talk. "A horseshoe token is exactly to your mind."

"Pon my soul!" was the reply. "Nothing could be finer, and this painting, too, is deucedly well done."

"Pray show me your peace offering, as you call it," said Mrs. Lorraine. "Your enthusiasm arouses my curiosity."

"Your admiration will be equally aroused when you see it, I think," replied Langton, rising and going over to where the lady sat.

"Really you are right in admiring it," she said, taking it in her hand and turning it about as if for the first time. "It is exceedingly novel, and I dare say all these painted designs have some pleasant significance."

"Then somebody must explain them," exclaimed Langton, "for, by Jove! I'm not up to such things."

"Of course you know that to find a horseshoe is a sign of good luck," said Mrs. Lorraine.

Langton laughed.

"And to have one sent to a fellow is better luck still, I suppose. But I'm blessed if I know what that weed is," he returned.

"Not know a four-leaf clover?" cried one of his companions.

"I know clover and grass well enough," answered Langton, "but those I've seen never grow with more than three leaves."

"That's because you've never been lucky enough to find one with four," said another, laughing.

"These violets are natural now, ain't they?" "Violets? They're pansies—that's for remembrance," quoted Mr. Wardlaw, who now spoke for the first time. "But what is that written across the top?"

"We must appeal to Mr. Earnshaw for a translation," said Mrs. Lorraine, sweetly.

"Pray, Mr. Earnshaw, come over here and tell us if this is not a German motto."

Earnshaw obeyed and crossed the room to his hostess's side. She, keenly watching him as he

took the iron shoe, noticed that his hand trembled and that his face was a trifle paler than ordinary.

"Auf Glück," he said, reading the inscription. "It signifies 'Good Luck.'"

A clapping of hands followed this announcement and everyone turned upon Langton with laughing congratulations.

"You're on the high road to success, beyond a doubt," said one. "Tisn't many a fellow who has such a point-blank assurance."

"You are quite right, Mr. Beauchamp," replied Mrs. Lorraine, gravely. "It would have been much more delicate in Miss Lorraine if she had chosen another time and another method for making her feelings known; but, as I was just remarking to Mr. Wardlaw, it is a very difficult matter to instil sensitive instincts where they do not exist. Mr. Langton," she continued, turning to that triumphant young man, "I do not wish to deprive you of your happiness, but in justice to myself I must say that I am sorry that a member of my family should have been quite so forward in conferring it."

Langton glanced toward the angry Mabel, who still sat in a distant part of the room raging with inward fury. With a man's delight in tormenting one by whom he is unduly and unworthily beloved, he said:

"I cannot share your regret, Mrs. Lorraine. This little gift has given me so much pleasure that 'pon my honour, I wish the presentation had been made more publicly still. It's a deucedly pretty thing," he repeated, holding it out at arm's length. "I'll hang it up at the Sportsman's Club, with Miss Clara's name attached to it. Indeed I shall be glad to do so," he added, looking around as if he expected his last speech would create some surprise. "I tell you Miss Clara isn't appreciated yet, for deuced few fellows have seen her, but when she does come out, I'm blest if she won't create a sensation, and when that time comes her card in a fellow's possession will be worth something."

Mrs. Lorraine glanced covertly at her daughter during this burst of vain-glorious talk, and was satisfied with the effect the young man's words produced. She noted also that an angry flush rose to Earnshaw's brow, and thought she detected an impatient movement on the part of Mr. Wardlaw.

"Pray let me see the young lady's card," the latter gentleman said, extending his hand toward Langton, who at that moment was putting the bit of pasteboard into his pocket-book. It was handed to him, and Mr. Wardlaw, without an instant's hesitation, tore it in two and tossed the fragments into the grate beside him.

"What is the meaning of that, sir?" cried Langton, astonished.

"The meaning is a very simple one," returned the other, quietly. "In my time it was thought an insult to bandy a young lady's name about in a Sportsman's Club. Miss Lorraine is the daughter of an old friend, and I warn you that no advantage must be taken of what may seem to have occurred this evening."

"Pon my word, I don't understand you!" cried Langton, angrily, springing to his feet with great bluster.

"I think my words were sufficiently explicit," replied Mr. Wardlaw, calmly. "I am willing, however, to enter into a more minute explanation if you like. Perhaps for that purpose you will do me the honour of calling at my hotel," and taking out his card he passed it to the excited young man.

Half a century before, this incident would have been considered prophetic of a duel, but Langton evidently did not come of duelling stock, for a few moments after accepting the card, he sullenly bade the company good-evening and retired.

Mabel returned his parting salutations with freezing dignity, but the pressure which he gave her hand and the significant glance which accompanied it, served in a small degree to restore the equanimity of the infatuated girl.

The other guests, with the exception of Mr. Wardlaw, also presently withdrew, and with the last of them Mabel herself retired, rushing to her room to indulge in a flood of angry tears,

and to think of the vengeance which she would wreak upon the luckless Clara. Mr. Wardlaw also rose to take leave, but Mrs. Lorraine detained him.

"Surely you will wait until my husband returns, will you not?" she said, with one of her sweetest smiles. "He is not ordinarily so late. He will doubtless soon be here."

The wily woman knew that her husband at that very moment, according to his usual custom, was seated in his library reading the evening papers.

"You are an old friend, Mr. Lorraine tells me," she went on, "so you must learn to feel quite at home in our house."

"Thanks, madame, your invitation is a flattering one. Mr. Lorraine and I are indeed old acquaintances, but it was with his brother that I associated the most freely."

"I never had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Arthur Lorraine," said the lady, constrainedly. "My husband had reasons for limiting his own intercourse with him, so I was not free to act as choice might have dictated."

Mr. Wardlaw strove to conceal the great interest which he really really felt as he replied:

"I trust that no open rupture occurred between the brothers?"

Mrs. Lorraine, intent upon discovering the cause why her husband treated this man with such unaccustomed deference, replied:

"As a wife, sir, I cannot state the precise nature of their differences."

"Did not your husband regret his estrangement from his only brother?"

"Far from it, Mr. Wardlaw. I think my husband was always disturbed by the thought that Arthur might return and make some claim upon him."

"Indeed!" again ejaculated the attentive guest.

Mrs. Lorraine went on:

"Arthur was very improvident—so different from my husband, you know—and it worried Alfred to think that a fortune belonging entirely to himself should ever be taxed to support the family of his inefficient brother."

"Therefore, you say, your husband always discouraged his brother's visits?"

"Yes; and I also fancy that Mrs. Arthur Lorraine and my husband would rather not have met."

"Why not, pray?"

Mrs. Lorraine's eyes flashed with jealousy.

"For reasons which it would not become me to name," she said.

Mr. Wardlaw rubbed his finger across his forehead. He remembered Mrs. Arthur Lorraine, and recalled her proud defiance of wrong, and her hatred of deceit. He also reflected that if her brother-in-law had trespassed upon her husband's rights he might well dread meeting her.

"Yet Mrs. Lorraine left her only child to your husband's care, did she not?" he presently asked.

"Yes; and a most unfortunate bequest it has been," she replied. "The poor child is totally unfit for a city life. You have seen this evening two instances of the way in which she violates the proprieties."

Mr. Wardlaw fixed a searching glance upon the face of the speaker; but she met his gaze unflinchingly.

"A boarding-school would be a much more suitable place for the child."

"Child!" repeated the other. "She seems to me quite a young lady."

"A young lady only in appearance. Her mind is singularly infantile; really quite weak."

"Have I not heard that she instructs one of your daughters?"

"Yes; Clara, who is very young. Clara is entirely capable of teaching letters, numbers, and such rudimentary knowledge."

Mr. Wardlaw was silent for a moment, then said:

"I think I heard you say this evening that you found the young lady a great responsibility."

"A very great responsibility," returned Mrs. Lorraine, decidedly.

"Then without doubt you would feel greatly relieved if I were to offer to take her off your hands?"

Mrs. Lorraine looked upon this remark as a marriage proposal; and so suddenly did it come upon her that for a moment she sat speechless. She at length exclaimed:

"Indeed, Mr. Wardlaw, I cannot so carelessly and suddenly throw aside the responsibility which I have assumed. Clara is a child, as I told you. She is immature. She needs the protecting care of a mother. My conscience will not allow me to consent to her quitting my roof for some time still."

"But I can procure for her a person who would be competent to act in your stead."

"No, no, Mr. Wardlaw, you must not think of such a thing! Indeed, you must not. I cannot permit you to take her away."

Mr. Wardlaw was silent. Certain visions of a sorrowful face, of tear-laden eyes, of quivering lips, and of a faltering step haunted him, and he longed to fathom the true state of affairs respecting his dead friend's only child.

After awaiting in vain the promised return of Mr. Lorraine, Mr. Wardlaw took leave, promising to repeat his visit at an early day. As he left the house some whim prompted him to walk into the next street and look back at the house he had just quitted. Large, lofty, and palatial, it stood out against the midnight sky with every semblance of being the abode of happy, peaceful inmates.

He looked towards the upper storeys of the house, and noted a light shining in one remote window. A figure moved back and forth athwart the illumined space, and Mr. Wardlaw, looking intently, presently convinced himself that it was a female figure; and something about the pose of the head, the upright carriage, the slender form, told the watcher outside that it was Clara Lorraine who occupied that attic room.

"So," he murmured to himself. "A motherly interest prompts the careful Mrs. Lorraine to place her niece as far away from herself as possible. The poor child must be looked after. I have seen enough to convince me that something is wrong."

He turned to move away, but doing so he stumbled in the darkness against another figure, standing not far from where he had himself been posted.

(To be Continued.)

LIFE changes its aspects as we grow old. In our young days we are compelled to give the closest attention to the rule of three. As we advance in years, however, things simplify themselves in a very mysterious way, and if we are married we generally find that the rule of one is about all we can submit to.

THE NEW EDDYSTONE LIGHTHOUSE.—The new building at Eddystone will be completed, at the present rate of progress, in less than four years. The lighthouse will be "the most commodious rock lighthouse in the world," and its focal plane will be 130 feet above high water. The lantern will contain an electric light of the first order, and a fog-signal of maximum intensity will also be provided.

THERE is a curious whim just now to carry flowers in small fancy baskets instead of in the hand as bouquets. Ladies take them to concerts and dances in this fashion, but there is something so formal-looking about them that the custom is not likely to survive long. At weddings these flower baskets are now most fashionable; twelve bridesmaids at a wedding the other day each carried one, not for the purpose of strewing her path with flowers, but while waiting for the bride, the baskets were placed on the floor of the church in front of the bridesmaids, and so formed two floral lines, between which the bride passed on her way to the altar, in front of which there was a very large orange tree, and the box which contained it was wreathed with foliage and blossoms.



[THE COMPLETED SACRIFICE.]

GERTY'S SACRIFICE.

Soon after I completed my sixteenth year, death deprived me of one of the best of mothers. She was mother, teacher and companion all in one. We had seen better days. My father had been in a lucrative business until the death of my little brother, five years before. He was thirteen years old when he met a sudden and most shocking death by being caught in machinery, and before he could be extricated he was crushed out of all semblance of humanity.

This terrible blow fell with crushing force on my poor father, and for many months prostrated him upon a bed of sickness. In the meantime his business suffered by the neglect and mismanagement of his clerks and the dishonesty of others, and in a year's time he felt obliged to give up all to his creditors, keeping nothing but a few pieces of furniture and our clothing.

My father was offered a bookkeeper's situation with a salary of two hundred a year in the house where he had once been owner. And this was due to his honesty in giving up all to his creditors. The salary was small to a man who had so lately occupied a high position. But business was dull, and he accepted the offer with thanks, knowing he could do no better, and feeling that his family must be provided for.

Mother's health began to fail about this time; never having been a strong woman, the suddenness of the blow induced heart disease. She

was often attacked with fainting spells, and many times we were assembled round her bed, thinking she must die. She had taught me music in all its branches, and at this time I was a better teacher than perhaps some thrice my age. During the last year I had a male teacher, as my mother's health was so poor.

Nothing can be sadder than the days that followed my mother's death. My father seemed unable to exert himself. Grief had so worn upon him that I was fearful of losing him too. But after the funeral he became more reconciled, and soon resumed work at the counting-house.

The days passed gloomily and sadly to me; but I busied myself in trying to make home as cheerful and pleasant as I could. My sister always met father on his way home, so that he would not notice the change so much on his return. He tried to be happy and make us so, but at last he had to give up and say he could work no longer. My mother died the last of March; the first of July my father came home, feeling weak and exhausted. I was sewing. He came to me, and laid his portemonnaie in my lap, saying:

"There, Gerty, is my salary, and five pounds extra which the firm has given me to take a vacation on. But I will rest at home with my children. Make the money go as far as you can, dear, for it is uncertain when, if ever, I shall be able to earn you any more."

I had been early taught to economise, and now, knowing the uncertainty of my father's health, I was more saving than ever. At the

time of my father's failure we removed to a small, cheap house, and found it large enough for our wants. The rent was reasonable. As my father grew worse, I concluded to let three rooms to a Mrs. Clark, a lady who had been very kind to us at the time of my mother's last sickness and death.

She had one son, a young man of twenty, in college, studying medicine. His mother economised in every way to insure his getting through college with all the honours. Her coming benefitted us in many ways; she knew just what father needed, and gave me very valuable hints in my expenditures.

I remember that on July the first I had fifty pounds. We had to live and pay rent out of this, and save something for the time when there would be no more money coming in. At this time I asked the advice of our family physician about taking music scholars.

He approved of the idea, and said that he would do his best toward getting some for me. His efforts were crowned with success, and during the next week four came. Two sisters living in the same street also came, and were duly enrolled as pupils. Bertha, my sister, was eleven years old, and attended school; but she helped me in my household matters. All her spare moments were at father's and my disposal. She read to and amused him, and was a great help to me.

The weather was intensely hot, and tried my poor father's failing strength to the utmost. He was now so weak that he was unable to dress himself. The doctor said there was no settled disease, but a general giving way of the system. He complained of being tired. He would say to Mrs. Clark:

"I only require rest to feel better. I am longing to lie beside my darling Mary; but my dear children—how can I leave them all alone? But God will take care of them."

Father died in October. Dear Mrs. Clark was a great comfort to us at this dark period of our lives. Bertha was ill for some weeks, she missed him so much. Her illness mercifully turned my thoughts away from the dead trouble to the living.

I had promised my mother on her death-bed to care for and shield Bertha from every trouble. Thus she became a sacred charge to me. My own wants were nothing if she had what she wanted. I think I became morbid on this subject. Still, as I look back on the years that have fled, I am not sorry for all or any sacrifice I have been called upon to make, as she has repaid it all in her generous love and devotion.

Poor Bertha and I were very lonely through the long winter evenings, and if it had not been for our dear, good friend, Mrs. Clark, I do not know what would have become of us. She cheered and taught us how to employ our leisure time so as to make the best use of it, and many a shilling was earned that winter by our judicious care of the precious moments as they passed.

By Christmas my class of six swelled to fifteen. I was doing nicely, and had paid up all my bills. If it hadn't been for thinking of my loved ones lying under the snow-drifts, I might be said to be taking comfort. There is nothing so good for the unhappy as steady employment. I found that to be true.

Just at this time Edgar Clark came home to spend two weeks. His coming enlivened the house. We had music and singing in the evenings, for he had a fine voice and played the flute well. He and his mother sometimes invited us to attend a concert or lecture, and this was a great enjoyment to me, as it was very rarely I had ever gone to such places. I was a very child in my ideas of all outside my home—not much ahead of Bertha in my experience of the world in general.

Edgar's visit came to an end, and we missed his kind voice and pleasant manners. He was his mother's boy in his kind, gentle ways, and very lovable.

The winter passed as winters generally do. My pupils advanced, and I won great praise for

my skill and energy in getting them along so expeditiously.

In the spring time I received five more pupils, and they occupied most of my time. I was ambitious to earn money enough to have Bertha's voice cultivated, for I had been told that it would make her fortune. I was proud of her; she was a happy, sunny-tempered girl, with roguish blue eyes, a fair complexion, while her little rosebud of a mouth looked as though it were made for kisses.

But her hair was the crowning beauty—luxuriant and shining like spun gold. She looked like a stray sunbeam that had fallen accidentally among us. I was a slighter build than Bertha, paler, with grey eyes and light brown hair. My good looks lay in my animation. Music transformed me.

In the summer holidays Edgar Clark came home to gladden our lives once more. During the time he remained we became fast friends. He seemed then like a kind brother to me, and tried in every way to have the time pass pleasantly. His mother never envied his attention to me; in that she differed from many mothers I have since known; but she loved me very dearly, and often said to others that if she had a daughter she would like her to be just like Gerty Holmes. Before Edgar left for college again he asked me to correspond with him, and I consented to write, with his mother's approbation. In fact, I did nothing of importance without asking the advice of my best friend, Mrs. Clark.

Time passed rapidly, and before many months had passed I was Edgar's affianced wife. We were very happy, and his next vacation was very bright to us; the weeks speeded by like hours until we found it was time to commence work again. He returned to his studies and I to my music. I steadily gained ground in my profession, until my scholars became so numerous that I was obliged to refuse taking any more. I had managed to lay by a snug little sum toward Bertha's instruction. We intended to take a trip to the lakes after Edgar graduated, and looked forward to a pleasant time among the hills. Mrs. Clark and I were present when he received his diploma, to gain which he had studied early and late. He came to us radiant in his well-earned happiness, and, embracing both he, whispered:

"Are you satisfied?"

"Yes."

He was so buoyant and light-hearted that soon we were in the gayest of humours.

We returned home proud and happy at bringing with us our hero with his new cognomen of "doctor." His mother talked of where a suitable place could be found to locate. He seemed quite silent about settling down, and, after his mother left us together, said:

"Gerty, I have something to say to you; if I get your consent, I can easily gain mothers."

He then went on to tell me that Dr. W— was going to America to remain a year or two. He wanted a secretary, and one who had passed his examination with honour. He had offered the place to him with a generous salary, and advised him to go, as it would enable him to learn that which would be of account to him in the years to come.

I asked him if he desired to go; if so, he had my consent at once. I should miss him very much, but I would think of his interests and be patient. He thanked me for being so generous, and together we gained the consent of his mother.

In three days he was to meet Dr. W— in London. We made the most of those few days; then he left us to meet his friend. He wrote on the eve of his departure and bade us try to be cheerful, and the time would not seem long in passing.

We tried to think so; but the months were long, and the winter was very cold and cheerless. I missed my friend more the longer he was absent, and so did his mother. I received many invitations to play for parties, concerts, and a few weddings. I refused none. I earned all I could for my darling Bertha, who had commenced her voice training.

She was growing up a lovely creature, and I dressed her in the best I could procure, to show off her rare loveliness. If her disposition had not been one of the sweetest in the world, I would have spoiled her completely. I tried to make her a good player, but she had no ambition to become such, so I gave it up.

Two years passed. I was now twenty, and Bertha sixteen. Her teacher was well satisfied with the progress she made, and informed me that in another year she could sing in opera on any stage. Her voice had great capabilities, and he encouraged us to hope for great things.

One evening Mrs. Clark, the professor and myself were listening to a new piece written expressly for Bertha, when who should walk in but our long absent Edgar. At first I hardly knew him, he was so changed. He had grown stouter, and a heavy brown moustache adorned his upper lip. He was as brown as a gipsy, and his dark eye was as full of merriment as of yore. He held me off at arm's length, and said:

"What have you been doing with yourself, my darling? You look thin and pale. You are working yourself to death; but I am a doctor, recollect, and you must obey my orders now."

He embraced his mother, and turned to meet Bertha. He looked surprised to see the young lady whom he parted with as a child. She was lovely that evening. She wore a pretty blue dress with lace ruffles, and her lovely, golden hair was arranged in curls and puffs. She coloured with pleasure at meeting our old friend. The thought passed through my mind then what a handsome couple they would make; she so fair and lovely, he so dark and noble-looking. But at this time I was not prepared to give my Edgar up to anyone.

Lessons were given up, and a season of joy and pleasure inaugurated instead. Edgar accompanied us everywhere. He had been gone so long that he was now anxious to see everything in his native city. We passed a week of unalloyed pleasure. I was then obliged to commence my work again.

Bertha accompanied Mrs. Clark and Edgar in their search of a house. Our marriage was to take place as soon as they found a desirable one and furnished it. I was not with Edgar and Bertha much for some weeks, as I had a great deal to do, and many engagements to meet.

Whenever I spoke of my marriage to Bertha she would flush up, then turn pale again, and I thought it must be because I was so soon to be married. But very soon there was a great change in my darling. She grew troubled, often sighed, and many times I found her in tears. She became weak and languid. I watched her closely, and often in her sleep she would murmur the name of Edgar. At last the truth broke upon me with all its unpleasantness. My sister loved my betrothed!

This was something I had never given a thought to. I was to blame for throwing my gentle sister in Edgar's company too much, and she so unused to male society. I knew Edgar was blameless, and I thought if I refused to marry him he would soon forget me, and my sister's loveliness would attach him to her and soon console him for my fickleness. It was hard for me to come to this conclusion, but once I knew it was my duty I was not long in putting it into execution. The next morning I said to Bertha:

"I believe I will not marry Edgar after all. I think a single life will be better for me, and a physician's wife has not a very enviable position."

Bertha looked at me in astonishment, and cried out:

"Oh, Gerty, you could not be so cruel to one who loves you so well?"

"It would not be cruel at all. He can easily find another to console him. I will speak to him about it, and you must try and make him forget me as speedily as possible."

I left her in tears. I soon heard Edgar coming to take me with him to select furniture for our future home, and my courage almost failed me as his dear face met mine, with a glad smile of love. I said:

"Edgar, I am troubled about something; can I confide in your friendship, aside from your love?"

He replied:

"Dearest, you know you have no nearer friend than I am; speak your thoughts freely, and if there is anything I can do to assure you of my deepest love and friendship, I am prepared now to make the assurance doubly sure."

"Dear Edgar, I am so sorry, yet forgive me when I say I can never marry you. I have thought of this with deep pain, but my reason tells me not to take upon me vows that had better be unsaid. I know you have reason to withdraw your friendship, but I beg you will not, for my sister's sake. We have no brother to lean on in the battle of life. Do not withdraw your protection and friendship from my innocent sister."

Edgar could not for some time believe the words I had spoken. He tried to shake my purpose, but I was firm in my new resolve. He called his mother to the conference. She was deeply grieved, as she had long considered me as a daughter. I think she had an inkling of the truth; but if she had, she kept it to herself. She treated me the same as ever, but never talked of Edgar's affairs with me again.

Bertha soon recovered, and was as gay as ever. She was with Mrs. Clark a great deal, and everything she said was done. She never tired of working for them, and as they were getting ready to move into their new house, Edgar called upon her incessantly.

This was as I had planned it, but it was very hard to bear. I gave my scholars a quarter's vacation, and informed Mrs. Clark that I was going to London to make a visit. She begged me to leave Bertha with her.

I left it with my sister to decide; she concluded to stay. I left home with a sore heart, but a heart at rest, as I knew that if I had followed its dictates, and anything had happened to my dear Bertha, I would never have known happiness again.

In November I left home. I was met in London by Stella Colbert, a former pupil, and a tall, gentlemanly man of prepossessing appearance, to whom I was introduced. "Brother John" was very kind and courteous to me. At the house I met Ella, another pupil, who was much pleased to see me again.

She was to be married the next week, and was going abroad. That was partly the reason of my visit at this time. They were a fine, old family, bound together by the firmest bonds of kindred love. Their affection for each other was something unusual. It was pleasant for their guests to see so much harmony; it reminded me of my father's and mother's household when we were children.

No one would ever think, by their attention to me, that I was only a poor little music teacher, earning my daily bread. The girls must have spoken of me in high terms, as every member of the family treated me with marked respect. If I had been happy I should have enjoyed my visit very much. Yet the change was good for me; I had to forget my own troubles, to comfort and assist Mrs. Colbert and Stella in their sorrow at parting with Ella.

I received a letter from Bertha written in one of her happiest moods. She spoke of the pleasant new home, of dear Mrs. Clark, and how tenderly she always spoke of me, and how Edgar was beginning to feel reconciled, and his practice was getting quite encouraging. She spoke of Edgar as accompanying her to different places. I thought within myself, "It will not be long before my darling is happy, and I, poor soul! am shut out of heaven to wander forlorn on the face of the earth!"

These were my first thoughts, but soon better ones prevailed. I was glad that my sister would gain her heart's content, even if I should always regret my single life. I received a letter from Bertha every week while absent, and the last one hinted at a secret I was to know when I returned. Stella's brother tried to make everything as pleasant for me as he could; but I fear I was not very grateful.

I was absent eleven weeks, and when I re-

turned to the old house, I found it empty and desolate. I drove to the doctor's, and was met by Mrs. Clark. She told me she had taken the liberty of moving my things to their house, as she knew she could not sleep nights knowing that we two girls were there alone. I was sorry, for I loved the old house as a friend, and did not like to be in daily intercourse with her son, as I then felt. I could not tell her my reasons, but I made up my mind that I should not stay there very long. She told me that Edgar had transferred his affections to Bertha. She said:

"Gerty, I love her, but not with the love I have for you, my poor, desolate lamb!"

I subdued my own feelings, and tried to seem happy. When the doctor and Bertha returned they met me with kind and loving words. As soon as the evening meal was over, Edgar asked me to step into his study for a few moments. I complied. He placed a chair for me near his own, and at once began the subject that I dreaded, but felt must be discussed. Said he:

"Gerty, it doesn't seem right for us to be in the position to each other that we now hold. But it is your will. You chose to cancel the engagement between us, never giving me a reason for so doing. I suppose you ceased to love me. But my heart is lonely, and I have found another who is willing to try to make me forget my present misery. I have not forgotten you, but marriage with her will, I hope, heal the wound you have made. I ask you if you have any objections to my marriage with Bertha. She is willing to take me as I am, if you do not object."

The room swam round, and I feared I should faint; but a strong will kept me firm. My heart was burning, but I must make a reply. My voice sounded afar off as I said:

"There is no one I would so soon choose for Bertha's husband as yourself. I love you as a brother; my highest ambition for her is to be your cherished wife. She loves you devotedly, and you have my earnest prayers for your future happiness."

I arose, and was groping my way to the door when he noticed something strange in my manner. He came to me, and none too soon, as I was slipping down upon the floor. He raised me, laid me on the lounge, and covered my face with kisses. These aroused me. He was kneeling by my side. I tried to rise, but he gently replaced me, and said:

"My own darling Gerty, tell me the past is only a dream—that you love me still."

I was angry at my own weakness, and with all the strength I could bring bear to my aid I said:

"No, Edgar, I love you only as a dear brother. You are mistaken. I am very tired. A good night's rest will set me all right."

He helped me to rise, and said:

"Pardon me, dear sister, I will always be a true brother to you."

He left me in the hall, and I did not see him again that night. I found my sister. She was approaching the subject of our discussion, but I set her mind at rest by saying:

"It is all right, dear; I have spoken to Edgar; he is just the husband I could wish for you. May you be happy in your choice."

She asked me why it was I could not love Edgar. I said:

"All people cannot love the same person. It is so in my case."

An early day was appointed for the wedding. I was there and dressed the bride; and no lovelier one ever pledged her marriage vows than my darling sister.

After their marriage my mind grew calmer. My pupils commenced their lessons, and I did not have much time to think over past troubles. My time was so fully disposed of that it was rarely I found an evening to spend with Mrs. Clark. She was kind to Bertha, but there was always a tender feeling for poor little me.

My sister had been married eight months and they were happy months to her. Her husband loved her devotedly now, if he did not at his marriage. She engrossed all his spare moments.

He had been steadily gaining ground in his profession, and bade fair to become wealthy and famous. His habits were unexceptionable.

In November I received a pressing invitation from the Colberts to attend Stella's wedding. Mrs. Colbert wrote:

"Do try, dear Gertrude, to come on and make me a long visit, as I am going to lose my dear Estella, and will be so lonely."

So I went on the first of December, and returned on the first of April, when I did not come alone. I was accompanied by Stella's only brother, now my accepted lover, and we were engaged to be married the first of June, the month of roses.

I have been married three years, and in all that time I have never regretted trying to make others happy. In doing my duty to my fellow mortals I have done well for myself; and I feel that the smallest act of kindness done to another is meritorious in the eyes of God. J. M. E.

LOVE OF THE TERRIBLE.

The Spaniards view everything connected with an execution with morbid horror, and all actually employed in the operation are accounted infamous. Even the gloomy scaffold on which the culprit is strangled is usually erected in the night, and by unseen hands. It rises from the earth like a fungus-work of darkness. Yet every execution attracts a large crowd of spectators, to see how the criminal will conduct himself. They sympathize with him if he displays bravado or courage, and they despise him on the least symptom of unmanliness.

At the fatal hour the culprit appears, usually clad in a coarse yellow baize gown—the colour in which the Spanish school of painters robe the special object of their contempt, Judas Iscariot. The scaffold having been mounted, the culprit is placed on a rude seat. His back leans against a strong upright post, to which an iron collar is attached, enclosing his neck, and so contrived as to be drawn home by turning a powerful screw behind the post. The arms and legs of the culprit are tightly bound. When all is ready the executioner takes the screw in both hands, gathers himself up for a powerful muscular effort, and at the moment of a preconcerted signal, draws the iron collar tight, while an attendant flings a black handkerchief over the face. The tragedy is over in a few moments, and the victim's sufferings seem slight.

"SHOP-LIFTING."

NECESSARILY, female shop-lifters must be ingenious and quick-witted. Their modes of operation vary, and are often very curious. A notable operator was recently arrested who committed her robberies in a very singular manner. When setting out for her predatory expeditions, she wore large, flat shoes, and had the toe part of her stockings cut off to form a sort of mitten; and being very dexterous with her toes for prehensory uses, she was able to pick up articles from the floor and secrete them in her slipper.

In looking over some pieces of lace, in a shop, she had, while the assistant's attention was directed elsewhere, dropped one or two, and adroitly secreted them as described. Another bright example of perverted ingenuity was developed in Paris, and required three persons to carry out the trick: A man, and his wife and daughter, enters a shop, and the proprietor is asked to watch the wife constantly, as she is afflicted with kleptomania. Consequently the older lady is assiduously watched. Some article is pilfered in due course, the theft noticed, and the gentleman on going out quietly and promptly pays for what has been taken.

While the shopkeeper is congratulating himself on the honesty of the husband, the trio are making off with a valuable booty secured by the younger lady, whose movements have not been

watched at all. But the best part of the stratagem remains to be told. In case the disappearance of the articles really stolen should be perceived a little too soon, and the party be followed by the indignant shopkeepers, nothing is easier than to express regret and surprise that there should have been other mistakes, and to return the articles with profuse apologies. By this ruse safety is secured, even if the shopkeepers are baulked of their booty.

FACETIA.

It is not generally known that the corps of military balloonists recently instituted by the War Office is officered by acions of the noblest families in the kingdom. The object of this arrangement is that no balloon may be sent up without carrying at least one person who is quite certain about his descent. —Fun.

DOUBLE MEANING.

MARY: "Get out wid ya, Pat! Ye niver mane the half that ye say!"
PAT: "Sure then, Mary, I mane the other half double, so it's all one!" —Fun.

A MILITIAMAN'S DREAM.

Misthought the on a summer's day
"Neath wide outspreading trees,
Shunning the fervid heat I lay,
And, o'er the distant leas,
These warlike sounds of mimic fray
Were borne upon the breeze.
Fall in, assemble, shoulder arms,
Fix bayonets, as you were!
Bugler, approach, and sound alarms,
Battalion, form square;
March past in column afterwards,
Deploy on number three,
Two volleys at three hundred yards,
Down, front rank, on the knee!
Fix swords, prepare for cavalry,
Wheel smartly back the flanks;
Unfix, fours left each company,
Right wheel, halt, front, change
ranks.
Return your swords when skirmish-
ing.

Extend by sections, fire!
Advance by each alternate wing.
On your supports retire.
Up the reserve, and reinforce,
Lie down those skirmishers,
Double in rear, supports, in fours,
Seek cover 'mongst the fir.
Break into column to the right,
Halt, steady, reform line,
Advance by rushes to the fight,
Column on number nine.
Receive the General's compliments,
And to his speech attend;
Shoulder, right turn, dismiss, strike
tents.

The training's at an end. —Fun.

"HONESTY ITS OWN REWARD."

A stingy gentleman has given a young cross-sweeping sixpence.

CROSSING SWEEPERS (running after gentleman): "Oh, if you please, sir, it's a bad 'un."
STRINGENT (complacently): "A bad one, is it, my good boy? Well, no matter, keep it for your honesty!" —Fun.

"TAKING IT IN THE RIGHT SPIRIT."

BENEVOLENT OLD LADY: "Tell your mother, William Stubbs, that I shall call in during the day, and give her a little spiritual comfort."

W. S.: "She'll be glad of that, marm, cos she can't pay the score at the 'Bull' sinst feyther died, and ain't had no spirits fur a week." —Fun.

"AN UNBIASED OPINION."

MASTER JACK (who, after the ladies have indulged for some time in baby worship, has been told he may kiss the little darling): "No,

thank you, I'd rather not, and what you girls can see in the little beast, I don't know; ain't half as pretty as the dog." —Judy.

NOT A PROMISING YOUNG SCOT.

OLD HIGHLANDER (to village post-boy, with a telegram): "D'ye ken what it's about, Sawney?"

SAWNEY (who was told by his father, the postmaster): "Aye, it says that Donald is comin' hame the morn's morn frae the fushin; and ye'll hae to pay a saxeence, or I'm no to gie yer it."

O. H.: "Na, na! Ye mairn jist tak' it back, and say I dinna want it." —Judy.

A PLEASANT PROSPECT.

THE REV. HEAD-MASTER: "What do you mean by buffeting a person?"

NEW BOY: "Shying stools at him, sir." —Judy.

HOW THE CO-OPS CRUSH THE LONDON TRADER-MEN.

WINE MERCHANT (opening letter) to his shopman: "Here's a note from Lord Ogleby, our oldest and steadiest customer. Wants some more of our 'fine golden, at 85.' Send on three dozen at 18, will you, but don't use one of the cases from the stores this time, or it may be noticed." —Judy.

"SOLD!"

SCHOOL-BOARD INQUISITOR: "Good-morning, coachman. Your name is Prosser, I believe? Have you any children—boys or girls?"

OLD GROOM (assuming intense meekness): "Yes, sir; at your service, sir. Yes, sir, two girls, sir."

S. B. I.: "Do they go to school?"
O. G.: "School, sir? Not they, sir."
S. B. I. (fiercely): "And pray why not?"
O. G. (snaking his head): "Ah, sir, they've got such wills o' their own, sir."

S. B. I.: "Aha!"—(producing note-book with ardour)—"Their names and ages?"

O. G. (still more meekly): "Jane and Mary, sir. One's nineteen, sir, and the other's just turned o' two-an'-twenty, sir."

(Exit Inquisitor hastily.) —Punch.

"L'INVITATION A LA VALSE."

SCENE: Garden Party.

SIR FREDERICK: "May I—a—have the pleasure?"

FAIR AMERICAN: "Wal, I don't mind if I do take the creases out of my knees a bit!" —Punch.

"VIVISECTION!"

MELANCHOLY BARBER (with a soul above his business): "I don't get much of a livin' by it, sir."

CUSTOMER (through the lather): "Then—you ought—for you scrape—hard enough—for it!" —Punch.

DOING HIS BEST.

MAGISTRATE: "It seems, prisoner, that you took fifteenpence from the prosecutor's till. Now, I put it to you seriously; was it worth your while to risk your character, your liberty, your whole future, for such a trifle?"

PRISONER: "Certainly not, your worship; but I did not know there was not more in the till—I took all there was!" —Funny Folks.

A NICE QUIET PLACE.

ANGELINA: "Why, Edward, you sitting there yet?"

EDWARD: "Yes, my love. Saw some one pass three hours ago, and I don't want to miss him as he comes back." —Funny Folks.

STATISTICS.

CALCULATIONS are already being made as to the amount of loss which the farmers will experience owing to the bad season. An estimate has been made that the deficiency on the corn crops alone will be £25,000,000, and £28,000,000

if beans, peas, and rye are added. Potatoes show a loss of £15,000,000, hops of £1,250,000, and hay of £15,000,000. Here is a total loss of little less than £60,000,000. It is further said that we shall have to import at least 16,000,000 quarters of wheat, against 14,000,000 quarters last year.

HIS LEAVE.

THE late Charles Lever, Consul at Trieste, had accompanied his daughter to London. Lord Lytton, hearing of his arrival, invited him to dinner.

"Ah, Lever!" said he, greeting him, "so glad you were able to come. You will meet your chief, Clarendon" (then Minister of Foreign Affairs).

Now Lever had omitted the formality of applying for leave.

"I fear I must retire; my nose is bleeding," he replied, making for the door, which at that instant opened, Lord Clarendon being announced.

After shaking hands with the host, his lordship espied Lever before he could make good his retreat.

"Ah, Mr. Lever! I didn't know you were in England. I didn't even know you had asked for leave."

"No-o-no, my lord," stammered the witty novelist, "I thought it would be more respectful to your lordship to come and ask for it in person."

THANKS TO THE RAINY WEATHER.

ONE day while strolling down the lane to meet my Arabella,

I met her sister, Mary Jane, and hasten'd soon to tell her—

To tell my darling I was bye with gingham ready waiting.

Where first I met her on the sly in spring when birds were mating.

But Mary Jane looked spruce and neat and smiled as this I told her,

I thought a kiss would be a treat and in my arms I'd fold her;

She blush'd and said, "Don't tease me so, I know it's only playing."

So another one I took 'or so as down the meadow straying.

When up the lane with stately grace I saw my Arabella

With such a look upon her face, 'twas neither pink nor yellow;

"How dare you, sir," she calmly said, "behave to me so badly?"

I'd sooner see her stamp and rave and tear her hair most madly.

Just then the rain began to fall, and I saw that my charmer

Thought more of her dear clothes than all my doings that could harm her;

So I put my gingham o'er her head to save from ill her bonnet,

The clouds upon her face soon fled and a smile arose upon it.

We soon began to chat about as passed the moments fleetly,

Something that chased away the pout and changed all things completely;

A kiss or two soon made all right as home we strolled together,

And no one noticed it, I'm sure, thanks to the rainy weather.

A FOR may excel in dress, but address is the characteristic of a gentleman.

HAPPINESS, in this world, when it comes, comes incidentally. Make it the object of pursuit, and it leads us a wild-goose chase, and is seldom, if ever, attained.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

LOED MAYOR'S CAKES.—Break four eggs into a pan, and whisk them to a froth. Then take two pounds of flour, make a hole in the centre, and put in a tablespoonful of fresh thick yeast; pour in half a pint of milk warmed; mix it up with part of the flour, and set it to rise. When it has risen, put an ounce and a half of butter, two ounces of sugar, and a little milk, over a slow fire. While this is melting, put your eggs, with half a tea-spoonful of salt, into the flour and yeast; when the butter and milk are lukewarm, pour them in and mix all into a soft dough. Butter your cake hoops and place them on your iron plates, fill them about an inch deep, set them in a warm place to rise. When quite light, bake them in a hot oven.

COLD MEAT.—Cold meat, made into an aspic, is a delicious way of using the last of a joint, especially in summer-time. Cut the meat in pieces, and lay them in a mould, in layers, well seasoned. Then pour over and fill the mould with some clear soup, nearly cold; which, when let to stand some hours, will turn out and be as firm as isinglass, especially if shank bones were boiled in the soup. Should the cold meat be veal or poultry, the addition of small pieces of ham or bacon, and of hard-boiled eggs, cut in slices, and put between the layers of meat, is a great improvement.

MISCELLANEOUS.

CORN ripens at a temperature of 43°, and farmers should be cautious in cutting down their unripe corn on the supposition that, in a cold autumn it could fill no more.

A MACHINE has been invented for dealing cards. The pack is placed in a sort of box from which only one card can issue at a time, expelled by two wheels, which can be turned by the thumb with considerable rapidity. This apparatus, it is said, completely prevents all kinds of cheating.

BRIGHTON is waging war against babies in perambulators: nurses must wheel them in the roadway, not on the pavement; the authorities have no fear of vehicles running over the perambulators: If people object to their babies being killed they ought not to go to Brighton.

NEVER use fast words. It may not always be agreeable. "How do you like my boots, love?" exclaimed a youthful bride. "Oh, they're immense," replied the partner of her joys; and she had the first matrimonial fainting away as the result.

SINGULAR INCIDENT.—A correspondent writes as follows:—On Sunday morning, during divine service at Matson church, the congregation were alarmed by a sudden crash of glass. It appears that a poor thrush, pursued by a rapacious hawk, fled through the window and fell down dead by the feet of a lady. The hawk pursued the thrush to the window, but did not follow it into the church.

A REMARKABLE instance of endurance in a pigeon has just occurred in Devizes. A week or two ago a young bird fancier lost three pigeons, which had been let out for the first time. Two of them came back after a day or two, but the third was counted as lost. On two or three occasions it had been noticed soot had been falling down the chimney, and a day or two ago a noise of fluttering was heard from the same quarter. This led to a closer examination, and the missing bird was found, perched on a projection in the chimney, covered with soot and quite blinded. It was taken out, put into a box, and some food and water given it, which it devoured eagerly, and at once began cleaning itself. It is now as well as ever, and its sight appears to have returned. The poor bird had been confined in the chimney, covered with soot, for nine days, and it is a remarkable circumstance it should have survived so long without food or light.

CONTENTS.

Page.	Page.
UNDER A LOVE CHARM; OR, A SECRET WRONG	505
SCIENCE	508
THE COST OF CORA'S LOVE	509
DEMISS A PAVEL	512
PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS	514
FRANK HARTLEY; OR, LOVE'S TRIALS AND TRIUMPH	514
CLARICE VILLIERS; OR, WHAT LOVE FEARED	517
THE MYSTERY OF HIS LOVE; OR, WHO MARRIED THEM?	519
CLARA LORRAINE; OR, THE LUCKY TOKEN	521
GERTY'S SACRIFICE	524
PACETTE	526
STATISTICS	527
HOUSEHOLD TIPS	527
VERBS	527
MISCELLANEOUS	527

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

THOMAS L.—Apply to the nearest bookseller, or to Mr. Roberts, Bookseller, Row, London, W.C.

C. L. B.—1. We are not aware of any baby show being in contemplation just now. There have been one or two some weeks since, both in America and at the Crystal Palace. 2. We do not charge for answering questions.

E. G.—1. The black specks on your face are minute insects under the skin. The surest way is to press them out gradually and slowly with the thumb nails, taking care to bring away the root; then rub the skin with a rough towel. 2. Not knowing how you have contracted a mallow complexion, we are not in a position to advise you. Oatmeal and water and the use of tar soap are remedial.

CRISPIN.—We are not cognizant of any published book on "Practical Bootmaking." Perhaps some one of our numerous readers can advise you.

W. J. F.—We believe you can obtain the books you require by writing to Mr. Kent, bookseller, Paternoster Row, London. We are not acquainted with the prices.

READER.—The best thing would probably be for you to go to your father as soon as possible. You say that you have always been his favourite, and the chances are that he would be glad to see you, and would listen to your suggestions. Should he convey his property away for anything whatever, no matter how inadequate the consideration, it is not likely that you could recover it after his death. Should he will it to strangers you might, perhaps, upset the will, but it would be a costly and wearisome business. Should he die without leaving a will his family would, of course, be his lawful heirs. The best way would be for you to go and see him at once, and have the whole business properly arranged while he is alive.

ADELAIDE W.—You should stop going to parties and places of amusement with "the young lawyer," and in a little while other gentlemen would be emboldened to seek your company. If your love of amusement and party-going is so strong that sooner than restrain it you would prefer to gratify it in company with your annoying suitor, the idea that you are engaged to him will continue to be entertained by your acquaintances.

S. R. G.—Corns are caused by want of cleanliness, and chiefly by pressure. They give pain when they grow into a thick, horny mass. The proper cure, therefore, is to cut them down regularly, especially to pick out the central root, or core. Then apply a circular perforated plaster, and wear roomy boots.

W. L. T.—To remove freckles, keep in the shade, and apply a little cold cream of roses to the skin night and morning.

CONSTANT READER.—Your question, "If a man discharges his wife can she claim a support from him?" is not very clear. If you mean that when a man turns his wife out of doors she has no claim on him for maintenance, you are mistaken.

T. G. V. W.—Many of our correspondents affirm that Oldridge's Balm of Columbia strengthens the hair and prevents baldness and the hair turning grey, so we recommend you to give it a trial.

O. P.—A landlord may seize pawn tickets for rent, and sell them for what they are worth. He is bound to realise such tickets, just as he is other property.

R. W.—A man once acquitted by a jury on a charge of murder cannot be tried again for the same offence, not even if he confesses his guilt.

ROB.—A husband is bound to maintain all the children of his wife by a former or by former husbands as long as she lives.

FRED ASKS WHICH PART OF A WHEEL (that is, the outside) turns the fastest when the wheel revolves: if one portion travels through a greater space than the other, please state why. A. On the periphery all points have the same speed.

ROBERT.—You should have spoken to the young lady's father on the subject the last time you called. It is not too late for you to do so now if you really love the girl and want her for your wife. You are the wooer and must do the wooing.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE WILL BE COMMENCED A NEW STORY, ENTITLED,
"ETHEL ARBUTHNOT; OR, WHO'S HER HUSBAND?"

By the Author of "Amy Robsart," "The Bondage of Brandon," "Breaking the Charm," &c., &c.

J. T. T., W. S., and R. S. M., three seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with three young ladies. J. T. T. is twenty, fair, good-looking, fond of music and singing. W. S. is twenty-one, dark, and medium height. R. S. M. is twenty, fair, good-looking, fond of music and dancing.

FREDERICK B. and WALTER J., two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies. Frederick B. is eighteen, medium height, fair, loving. Walter J. is eighteen, tall, curly hair, and good-looking. Respondents must be about the same age.

ALONE IN THE WORLD, thirty-two, tall, dark, loving, would like to correspond with a tall, fair young man. A tradesman preferred.

PATTY, twenty, of a loving disposition, domesticated, would like to correspond with a gentleman about twenty-three with a view to matrimony.

BOWMAN OF CUTTER and RORY TOM, two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies. Bowman of Cutter is twenty-two, medium height, dark, blue eyes, and fond of music and dancing. Rory Tom is twenty-six, fair, fond of children, medium height.

A. Z., fifty, a widow, would like to correspond with a gentleman between fifty and sixty.

GUIDING STAR, nineteen, good-looking, fair, medium height, light blue eyes, would like to correspond with a young lady residing in or near London with a view to matrimony.

COOK TO-DAY, COOK TO-MORROW, and NONK TO DRINK, three seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with three young ladies. Cook To-Day is twenty, medium height, dark hair and eyes, loving. Cook To-morrow is nineteen, tall, fair, hazel eyes, fond of children. Nonk to Drink is twenty-one, tall, dark hair and eyes, of a loving disposition.

BUTTERCUP and DAISY, two friends, would like to correspond with two tradesmen. Buttercup is twenty-five, dark, medium height, fond of home and children. Daisy is twenty, fair, of a loving disposition.

COOPER, fair, tall, fond of home, would like to correspond with a young lady about nineteen, thoroughly domesticated, dark.

A WEARY ONE.

WITHIN my restless, aching heart
Sweet peace is ever a guest;
I long to lay my burden down
And for ever be at rest.
Bright flowers bloom no more for me
Along life's desert way,
And even hope within my heart
Is fading day by day.
Still onward in the rugged path
My tired feet must go,
Until my weary pilgrimage
Is ended here below.
Grim Death I now no longer fear—
'Tis but the entrance door
To that abode where I shall find
Sweet rest for evermore.

L. G.

HARRY R. and CHARLES M., two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies with a view to matrimony, about twenty-two (from Kent preferred). Harry is twenty-three, tall, dark, good-looking, and hazel eyes. Charles is twenty-one, dark, blue eyes, considered very handsome.

ANNIE MARIA, nineteen, dark, medium height, would like to correspond with a gentleman between twenty and thirty, tall, good-looking.

AUDACIOUS, ROVER, and VOLAGE, three seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with three young ladies. Audacious is twenty-two, dark hair, hazel eyes, dark, good-looking, of a loving disposition. Rover is twenty-one, fair, tall, handsome, fond of music. Volage is twenty-three, dark, hazel eyes, fond of children, good-looking.

HANDSOME TOM and CREEPING JACK, two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies. Handsome Tom is twenty-one, dark, curly hair. Creeping Jack is twenty, fond of children.

LUCY and BESSIE, two friends, wish to correspond with two young gentlemen (mechanics preferred). Lucy is nineteen, dark, medium height, of a loving disposition, thoroughly domesticated. Bessie is eighteen, tall, fair, of a loving disposition, fond of music. Respondent must be about twenty-two.

F. M., thirty, a widower, fair, would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony who is fond of home.

S. B., twenty-one, would like to correspond with a young lady about eighteen, fair, loving.

SNAP CAP and CARTRIDGE, two friends, in the R.M., would like to correspond with two young ladies with a view to matrimony. Snap Cap is twenty-four, dark hair, light blue eyes, fond of children. Cartridge is twenty-two, medium height, light hair, fair, good-looking, fond of music.

JACK, STARBOARD, MUD HOOK, and WILLIAM, four seamen in the Royal Navy, wish to correspond with four young ladies with a view to matrimony. Jack is twenty-three, dark hair and eyes, tall, good-looking. Starboard is twenty-two, light hair, blue eyes, fair, fond of music. Mud Hook is twenty-one, medium height, dark brown hair, blue eyes, good-looking. William is twenty, brown hair, hazel eyes, tall.

PET OF THE MESS, COFFEE URN, VEGETABLE DISH, and SOUP TUREEN, four seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with four young ladies. Pet of the Mess is twenty, fair, blue eyes, medium height, fond of dancing. Coffee Urn is twenty-four, fair, of a loving disposition, medium height. Soup Tureen is twenty-five, fair, brown hair, hazel eyes, fond of children. Vegetable Dish is twenty-five, tall, dark.

T. F. D. would like to correspond with a pretty, fairly educated young lady with means, residing in or near Liverpool.

CLOTHES LINE WHIP, BY THE MARK TEN, SHANK PAINTER, and DEAD NIP, four seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with four young ladies. Clothes Line Whip is twenty-one, dark eyes, loving. By the Mark Ten is twenty-four, good-looking, blue eyes, and loving. Shank Painter is twenty-three, dark hair and eyes, fond of children. Dead Nip is nineteen, light hair, blue eyes, fond of music and dancing.

BLISS ROSE and MOSS ROSE, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen about twenty-three, tall, dark, fond of home and music.

LIVELY ANNIE and LOVING JENNIE, two friends, would like to correspond with two young men. Lively Annie is twenty-two, tall, dark. Loving Jennie is eighteen, fair, medium height. Respondents must be between twenty and twenty-four, tall, fond of music, and of loving dispositions.

GOT NONE, ARVIL JOE, TART NIP, and JUMPER GUY, four seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with four young ladies with a view to matrimony. Got None is tall, dark, handsome, fond of children. Arvil Joe is tall, of a loving disposition. Tart Nip is tall, dark, fond of music, good-looking. Jumper Guy must be between twenty and twenty-five, and thoroughly domesticated.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

BICYCLE JACK is responded to by—Annie, twenty, brown hair, blue eyes, medium height, loving.

EDITH SLIGO by—Bessie, nineteen, dark hair, grey eyes, medium height, fond of music.

BARKER, STRID TIZ by—Florrie, nineteen, dark hair, brown eyes, tall, affectionate.

CROSS SNOVEL JACK by—Nelly, eighteen, good-tempered, fair, tall, of a loving disposition.

AMERICAN by—E. H., nineteen, light hair, medium height, fond of home.

A. M. by—Nellie E., eighteen, dark, brown eyes, fond of home and music.

S. J. M. by—Arthur T. B.

H. D. by—Maud J., nineteen, fair, medium height, and of a loving disposition.

WATER SAIL BILL by—Katie, twenty-five, loving, fond of home; and by—Selina, twenty-four, brown hair, fair, of a loving disposition.

EMILY by—Richard S., twenty-two, dark, curly hair, blue eyes, medium height.

FLORIAN by—Edward Charles C., twenty-one, brown hair, hazel eyes, fond of music.

MARIE by—Charles, dark hair and eyes; and by—William E.

THOMAS by—E. E. T., eighteen, medium height, dark hair, blue eyes.

HENRY by—S. J. H., nineteen, dark hair, blue eyes, tall.

WALTER by—G. M. J., medium height, light hair, and blue eyes.

LILY by—Montague.

SKAGELL by—Dark-Eyed Maggie, nineteen; and by—Yorke H., twenty, medium height, brown hair, and blue eyes.

ROSA by—Frank, nineteen, tall, light hair.

LILY by—Albert, seventeen, tall, dark, fond of music.

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London: Published for the Proprietors at 334, Strand, by A. SMITH & Co.